

ISSUE # 30 Excitingly Irregular October 2007

ARCHIV

ABOLISHING

THE BORDERS FROM BELOW

*Healing our Sick Society...
Through Force or Mutual Aid?*



Anarchist Journal from Eastern Europe

There is a justifiable need to abolish the borders between nations, societies, cultures and whatever else separates and defines us. In order that this process does not lead to the formation of new borders or other types of segregation, like those established by elitist institutions such as the EU, NATO or UN, it has to be done from below, by the people. There is an enduring need to immediately abolish all states, governments and authoritarian institutions so that communities based on common values such as freedom, respect, cooperation and solidarity can be formed. These communities in turn can lead to the transformation of the world order into one based on the above mentioned values. In order to push that process forward with support for the development of the anarchist movement over the borders we have created ... ***Abolishing the Borders from Below: An Anarchist Journal from Eastern Europe***

There are many reasons why it is necessary to put out this type of publication on a regular basis. There are a large number of anarchist groups in EE which could operate much more effectively with a continual exchange of ideas, tactics, experiences and materials with similarly minded groups from all over Europe and the World. It is clear that many western activists are also interested in the ideas and actions of the "eastern anarchists". We believe it to be necessary to tighten the cooperation between east and west in resisting Fortress Europe, the globalization of the world economy, and above all capitalism and its effects on our life. A mutual exchange of inspirations, motivations, and cooperation from anarchist communities all over Europe is needed on a day to day basis not only in times of international protests like the ones in Prague, Gothenburg and Genoa. The intent of this paper is to set up a better network of communication between groups and individuals from different parts of this continent. It is also a platform for regular presentation and exchange for various anarchist groups from EE itself, as well as helping to strengthen contacts between them and will hopefully lead to mutual inspiration. It also gives an opportunity for effectively organizing common campaigns and struggles. The process of creating an editorial team for AbolishingBB was a great step toward this so we appeal to everyone to make the most of the information here as effectively as possible. Finally this paper can be seen also as a mirror of our movement so every positive development in EE is coming back to us in form of motivation for further work on this magazine ...

"Abolishing the Borders from Below"

An Anarchist Journal from Eastern Europe

AN ANARCHIST JOURNAL

"AbolishingBB" is a bi-monthly magazine with information on different political and cultural processes and activities in Eastern Europe seen, commented on and analysed from an anarchist perspective.

EDITORIAL TEAM & ABB COLLECTIVE

ABB is an international collective of migrant anarchist activists living in Berlin. The collective was formed in Autumn 2001 by a group of east-european migrant activists and was later joined by other migrant activists from other parts of the world. As well as this publication the collective also organizes a radio-show, a libertarian library, various solidarity actions, informative meetings and cultural events. We also cooperate with other anarchist groups, projects and campaigns (mostly in EE but not only) and support local and global struggles against all kinds of oppression and for a free-society.

CORRESPONDENTS

Our work would not be possible without the great contributions of our correspondents from around EE. The work is based on a relatively stable network of correspondents from different regions of EE which cover the most current, important and interesting issues. All people involved in AbolishingBB work on a non-profit basis.

EXECUTORS

Publishing, editing, text treatment, translation, photos & graphics treatment, layout, cover concept, english-proof, distribution to the local distributors, website design ... all done by ABB Collective, Print: DreiGroschenDruck & ABB

COOPERATION

If you operate in Eastern Europe you can send to us info about protests, manifestations and other actions going on in your region ... you can present activities of groups, collectives and projects working in your neighbourhood ... you can inform us about up-coming political and cultural events ... you can present statements of your group on local or global issues, you can express your ideas, opinions or criticism ... everything from anarchist perspective. You can join our redaction collective

as a correspondent sending regular reports covering different forms of activities in your region.

If you operate in other parts of the world you can help with distribution. You can spread information about this publication or just make the most of the information here as effectively as possible.

FREE COPIES / PRINT RUN

Free copies go to prisoners, all info-shops and libertarian librarians in Eastern Europe (who get in touch with us) as well as to our correspondents. At the moment we print by ourselves 1500 copies of each issue, and there are some local groups which make more copies by themselves after our agreement on that.

FINANCES

Unfortunately until now we were not able to cover our costs only through selling the newspaper so we would appreciate, if possible, benefits from outside

BAD ENGLISH REPUTATION

As you probably noticed *THE ENGLISH* which is used in this newspaper is very far from its grammatical and stylistic ideals. It is mostly because this is *ENGLISH* in which most of our correspondents, big part of our readers and most of us (as the editors) are communicating. So obviously we choose to use *ENGLISH* which is understandable for ourselves. Secondly, we decided to be rather "BAD ENGLISH REPUTATION" newspaper as to rise a level of language and this way eliminate probably 30-60% of our regular readers, especially in south and eastern Europe.

ABOLISHINGBB ONLINE

www.abb.hardcore.lt

This website is from one side a source of information about our collective but basically - an archive of texts which appeared in our newspaper in the past. Check it out (some chapters are still under construction).

NOT 100%

We do not necessarily agree 100% with all opinions expressed in the journal, but all here we found worth printing (for various reasons) !!!

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EDITORIAL

Providing Marks of Vitality of East European Anarchism. Yet... to Make it More Interesting: Excitingly Irregular.

Welcome to the pages of the October 2007 issue of our journal. It is time to finally admit: *AbolishingBB* is no longer a bi-monthly publication as it was mentioned on every cover of the journal until the previous issue. What we had been able to manage, with few exceptions, during the first 4-5 years of publishing can not be managed now. Not that the editorial collective is falling apart. Quite the opposite: while there is an ongoing fluctuation within the collective, some new members joined and actually the work on the journal seems to be even better organized as in the past. We just have within the group two different options about what is more appropriate: to bring the journal up-to-date every two months (means: intensify the work when the deadline is calling) or to bring it from time to time (means: intensify the work when the group itself is ready for it). There were times when the first option was more in charge, but now most of the group supports the second option. In the future it still may change (actually we hope that in the future everything will change on this world!) but for now it stays as it is: we will aim to surprise you each time by bringing out our *excitingly irregular* journal from time to time. But we are going to surprise you still at least few times per year! So, watch out...

Coming to the content of ABB#30. In the last two years we have been trying to provoke some concrete social issues on the pages of our journal. In the past we choose for it such topics like "Education", "Crime and Punishment", "Anarchist way of organizing" and some more. As well for this issue we made an attempt at inspiring our correspondents to give their voice on one concrete topic, namely, the problems of mental health of individuals and the ways society deals or should deal with them. We gave it the working title "Mental health in a sick society". The idea came to us many months ago but for various reasons we always postponed it.

One of the reasons was the feeling

that we need some extra time to discuss and prepare the subject. The time was often missing. But then we spent a few meetings discussing all the possible aspects of it. We finally decided that the 30th issue would be about it. From the very beginning we were conscious that it is an extremely difficult and at the same time very important subject; that it is not a popular issue, especially in Eastern Europe! Little has been written, little is spoken about it there and even less projects or concepts have been developed, both within the libertarian/anarchist circles or in the wider society. We considered this estimation as the main reason to at least touch the topic, to start thinking about. We consider this discussion as necessary in any time, especially in times when more and more people are getting lost in the social coexistence based on capitalistic logic. Then we became clear on the fact that confronting this issue could help us as well - finding more easy answers in many difficult situations. And then of course the contemporary society urgently needs to move on at this matter.

That is why we asked correspondents to see what has been written, discussed or set up around this problemat. And what happened? Actually, exactly what we had been expecting. For those of you who do not read our journal regularly, some information: the editorial collective is only exceptionally writing texts by ourselves so the content of ABB is 90% dependant on the contributions of correspondents. So what we got are very few texts; actually we can not speak about having a wider debate on this topic in here. However, practically, at least some of us, it still remains the main topic of issue. We for sure got many interesting reactions. Many people were telling us that they find the decision of focusing on this subject as a very good idea, that finally someone is touching this again, how important that is and that they can't wait to get the issue to read about it. These people will

be definitely disappointed. But we got a confirmation of our estimations: now we are sure that this is really an important subject. We all just need to start talking and writing about it. In our collective there were also some articles to be written but they have never got out of the people's minds or we just remain faithful to the concept of the journal: it is a platform of East European anarchists and not our own one so we will not replace dilemmas of our comrades from the EE with our own ones. On the other hand, some of the texts connected with this issue could be a bit personal and that is why it is so difficult to write them for the magazine read by hundreds or thousands of people. But then still - you will find here at least a first step to move with this issue further one day...

But that's just a beginning of what awaits you in this edition. Some members of our collective, growing up and being politicised in east European social movements, took part in *anti-election* activities against first "democratic elections" in Poland 1989. Already at this very confusing moment for the majority of society, anarchists were publicly warning people before taking part in this way of running the social processes. Those days society was confused and the movement very small. In effect almost 70% of the citizens of Poland participated in this first "free" election. One has to remember - for this society the election was something new, and every new thing makes you want at least to try. In the following 18 years many polish citizens decided never to do it again. 15 years later, in the last parliamentary election in 2005, only about 40% of society participated in the election.

This we are bringing this issue of ABB out exactly a few days before the new parliamentary elections in Poland and nobody should wonder with what anarchists there are busy with: the anti-election campaign is conducted all around the country and takes various forms. Among various actions, many texts also got published in the last

weeks and some of them we have translated here for you. At the same month as well our comrades in Ukraine and Bulgaria were busy with the same issue and they sent us their texts as well. So finally you find in this edition quite a large anti-election chapter.

Anti-militarism is another topic which makes its presence felt on the pages of this edition.

Geo-political games strictly connected with global capitalist processes effects in ongoing militarization of Eastern Europe. No, not that during the 50 years of state socialism such militarization was absent – of course it was very present, in some moments and places taking on a total character. But then, part of naive citizens expected that when most of the counties leaderships of generals had been replaced by democratic civil personnel (in persons of democratic politicians) the processes of armaments race, extension and modernisation of armies, pro military-politics and actual participation in wars, that all these tendencies will decrease and soon disappear from the region. Well, boom of the nationalistic tendencies and above mentioned capitalist geo-political dictate, led to quite the opposite development. East European armies took part in the war in Afghanistan and now in Iraq, Russia is since years smashing consequently the little Caucasian population and dealing with its weapons arsenal all around the globe, NATO is building up its criminal infrastructure in the whole region, to not even mention the situation in Kosovo or Turkey. The region is already full of blood and is just getting ready for a slaughter in some time in the future. So nobody can wonder that anarchists are busy resisting all these aspects. However, being conscious that all mentioned processes of militarization are only possible because of the authoritarian social relations we live in, the anti-militarist activities are focusing not only on fighting back one of the results of these relations (here: the militarization) but as well to resist the very sources of it: the state as a massive combine of social authori-

tarism, and capitalism as a factory of economic authoritarianism. Some aspects of these struggles are to be found in the magazine.

Another topic which found space here are reports from the ongoing **labour struggles**, here specifically in Poland again, which is on one side a result of the active participation of Polish correspondents on this issue, but as well of Polish anarchists within the struggles themselves, and of the increasing number of strikes and class confrontations in this country – all to be observed at the same time.

Antifascist resistance is the direct answer on the constant popularisation of nationalist tendencies in many east European regions. Our regular readers might

already be used to the frequent reports from Poland or Russia, and of course you will find here a text on the tragic end of the assault by Russian-Nazis on the anarcho-ecological camp in Argarsk in Siberia this summer. However in this issue you will also find some updates from antifascist resistance in Czechia and Serbia.

While **migration** is a constant part of every society in every time, capitalist globalisation, politics of war and the very concept of the European Union makes Eastern Europe a region of massive repression towards migrants and resistance connected with it. So you will find some reports from NoBorders action, interviews and background information on this topic in here as well.

We would like to bring your attention to other interesting interviews in this issue. First one is an interview with Turkish anarchists who are unfortunately seldom guests on ABB's pages. The interview contains a broad spectrum of topics so if you are uninformed about anarchist activities in this country it may be worth checking out. Second interview is a presentation of one of the most progressive projects of pol-

ish anarchists in the last years, namely, anarchist information portal "Centre of Anarchist Information" (CIA). What makes this interview even more interesting is that it also touches some specific issues of polish reality and the anarchist approach towards it. Third interview which we were ready to introduce to you was made with two Russian anarchists, Denis and Andrei, which have been randomly accused for famous bombing of Newskiy Express to St.Petersburg. We asked them some questions about this case as well as about the methods of criminalisation used by Kremlin towards Russian anarchists nowadays. Unfortunately, the answers did not reach us in time so you will probably have to check the next edition of ABB. When will it be ... well: surprise, surprise!

Yes... it took us a little longer than usual to get ready but we believe that this issue is again a clear mark of a vitality of minor but struggling and consequently developing anarchism in Eastern Europe. All respect goes as usually to protagonists of the struggles and to victims of state and capitalist oppressions described on the following pages, as well as to the dozens of our correspondents who made it possible to inform the world about these situations.

The Flags Remain BLACK & BLACK/RED.

Abolishing the Borders
from Below
October 2007



"Autonomous Tribune" as an Event in the Slovenian Student Struggle

The story of the autonomous student movement begins in late May 2007. It definitely did not start very ambitiously, quite on the contrary, it started as yet another discussion about the students' conditions in Slovenia, why students are so passive, even though the situation is getting much more difficult with every generation. The attendance of this discussion in Metelkova (autonomous centre in Ljubljana) was surprisingly high – more than 50 people attended. What was even more surprising – something happened. The reflections were suddenly translated into actions. It was one of those rare moments when words pass from the symbolic to the real dimension: someone suggested "Are we going to squat the Faculty of arts next week?" – and all students willingly embraced this suggestion. It was a political promise, a promise of what was to become alternative politics to the governmental program of privatization of the Slovenian system of higher education (introduction of tuition fees, privileged position of private schools, introduction of governmental control of professors etc.).

The day of the occupation of the Faculty of Arts came and with it the first general and constitutive meeting of Autonomous Tribune (AT). The first statement was written (see appendix), a couple of hundreds of students attended the meeting. The main target of critique was the general process of privatization and exclusive democratic practices. However, Autonomous Tribune was successful in radicalizing "student" demands that depart from the narrow student agenda that just wants to preserve actual rights... so, even the first statement already addressed antimilitaristic issues and the social circumstances in general. AT stressed the fact that all across Europe students are fighting for the same cause, against neo-liberal agenda and privatization of all public sectors etc.



After this meeting the movement arose – it was like a snowball effect. It gained a big recognition in media and started spreading to other faculties, where similar meetings and autonomous groups were formed. Autonomous tribune started to hold regular meetings and what is even more important is the fact that it gained autonomous spaces within faculties. Its form of organization is directly democratic, horizontal and inclusive. It is autonomous of all

actions and bigger actions: street theater, performances on the convention of right-wing civil society initiatives (see also <http://avtonomnatribuna.blogspot.com/>). In the beginning it was met with strong repressive measures from the police that started to criminalize its actors and its actions. One of the official reports stated that participants of the actions carried "anti-governmental" slogans and are to be persecuted due to this fact. The articulation reminds of the older Stalinist and contemporary anti-terrorist measures that we are facing today.

Even the official student organization started radicalizing itself and organizing smaller actions against the official governmental agenda. The student movement was successful in postponing the privatization agenda – the main actor, the Minister of Higher Education was deposed due to his "incompetence", but largely this can be attributed to the demand of the movement which had already deposed him in one of the first actions in front of the Slovene Government.

Even though it seems that everything is normal today, a new Minister will, of course, just carry on with business as usual. That means no rest for AT activists! After a long summer, a period of exams, one has to admit that AT has lost its momentum. However, a new alternative agenda is being set: AT is at the moment organizing a public forum with trade-unionist groups against privatization. In the middle of November (17.11.) there will be a mass demonstration against neoliberal tendencies and the student movement will take part in this initiative.



DECLARATION OF THE AUTONOMOUS TRIBUNE FOR THE AUTONOMY OF THE UNIVERSITY

On the 21st of May a group of students occupied the main hall of the Faculty of arts (University of Ljubljana, Slovenia) with the intention of practicing autonomy and freedom of thought. We symbolically opened the Autonomous Tribune for discussion and debated study problems, higher education reforms, privatization of the university and the question of autonomy. With this initiative we have joined the students in Europe and the World, who have already started the fight against neoliberal reforms of the educational system and the submission of all aspects of social life to the logic of market economy.

The Autonomous Tribune has come to the following conclusions:

1. We are objecting to the new draft of a bill regarding higher education. Not only was the bill written without involvement of those who should be involved in the first place, that is students and workers of the university, but also its content is a total failure.

2. We demand that any future legal arrangements of this field are based on the next premises:

The University is autonomous!
The University is not a corporation!
Study is free and generally available to everyone!

Knowledge must not be a matter of privatization and the capitalist profit-oriented logic! Knowledge should be a commodity available to everyone, serving the whole society and not merely the interests of capital.

University is in the hands of the students and not in the hands of the rulers and the capital. The educational process must be collective, containing dialogue and is to be based on the interest and the needs of the future university graduates. It must encourage solidarity, spontaneity, imagination, critique and reflection.

All programs that encourage militarization and subject the study to the market logic must be immediately removed from the University.

3. Instead of money being spent for destructive activities, it should be intended for social

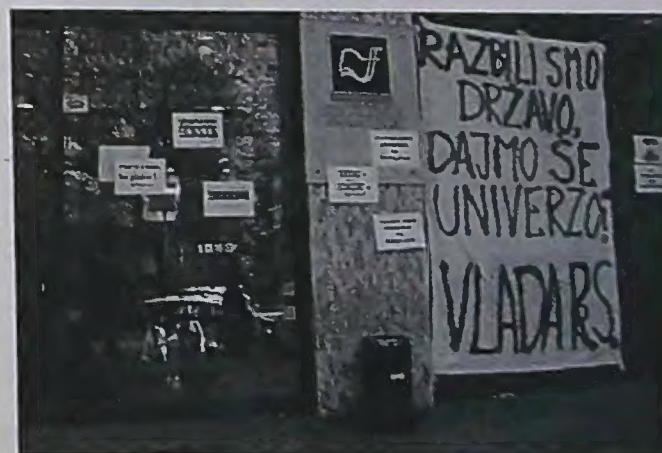
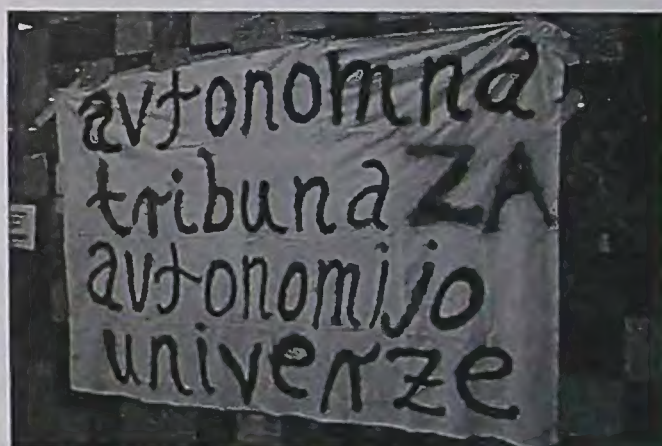
projects. So to begin with, we demand that both Slovenian soldiers be withdrawn from Iraq and the money spent on such actions is given to the socially handicapped families.

We salute all, who have already publicly defended the existing social rights and we reject any attempts of further reduction of rights. Once again we are appealing to all individuals, formal and informal student organizations, clubs, initiatives, unions, movements and workers in higher education to self-organize and publicly defend basic and universal rights.

**STUDY IS OUR RIGHT! WE DO NOT
NEGOTIATE OUR RIGHTS!**

**RIGHTS ARE STRUGGLED FOR AND
ARE NOT GIVEN!**

Autonomous Tribune
Main hall of the Faculty of Arts
(University of Ljubljana)
21.5.2007



Mental Health in a Sick Society



They Just Treat the "Patients" as Equals. It Works.

An interview by ABB Collective with Belarusian activists working in mental hostels in Minsk.

What is the name of your group and what do you do in your project?

We don't have any name as a group. We have three projects running at the same time. First of them is called OligoFriends Crew and this is just a distro project. We make a distro during concerts or other events and the money that we get are donated to the mental hospitals/hospices - we call them hostels. Some amount of this is needed for financing of our second project. This is an artistic studio in one of the hostels. The inhabitants of the hostel paint, draw or make some other artwork in the studio. their works can be later exhibited and sold. It gets people's attention and the hostels and its inhabitants become more known in the society. The best example is Genia. He is one of autistic „patients“, he has had some exhibitions and he is now pretty known in Minsk. There has been even an article about him in „Novinki“. He collected some money for his works. (We wanted to buy a few necessary things for him like some clothes, shoes. Later we discovered that the money had disappeared from his room...)

Our third project are the summer camps for the inhabitants of the hostels. Once in the year a group of about 20 „patients“ have the opportunity to go for holidays. One doctor from the hostels goes with us, this is the demand of the hostel. He

gets money for it, we work as volunteers. This project is financed by one of the German NGOs. So far we have managed to make three such camps, their participants change every time.

Can you tell us something more about the hostels? What is it exactly?

They are mental hospitals, or better hostels, where people with mental problems are supposed to live for the whole of their lives. There are separate hostels for children. When they grow up they move, well, they are moved, into the ones for adults. Of course these are state-governed hostels, there is nothing private in Belarus.

How do people get to these hostels?

Actually anyone can get there. There are people who really need some special care but there are also people who are able to work and live normally. They have just had some temporal problems. It also happens that a family sends their child or some older member of the family because they don't want to take care of them. You can get there irrespective of your situation. So, there are around 600/700 persons in such hostel and they are all in many, different situations. Nevertheless, they are all locked together.

Are they allowed to go out?

No, not anymore. At least not alone. Some time ago it was still possible but since the new headmaster came, they are not allowed to go out. By the way, the headmaster used to be a supervisor in jail before... Theoretically they are allowed to go out with me but anytime I try, I have problems to take someone out.

Is it possible to leave such hostel and live alone?

It would be for sure very hard and expensive. It is a complicated procedure where the court and many commissions have to take decisions. But yes, you should always try.



If we understood it well, you are cooperating with the hostels, aren't you? How do the official workers treat you and your activities?

Yes, we do cooperate - we have no choice. We would love to do this without them but then we would have different problems. In Belarus it is almost impossible to do something freely. If we want to take some children for the summer camp, we need to cooperate with the doctors, we need to talk with them for the whole year before the camp. The cooperation enables us the contact with patients of the hostels, the possibility to meet them. They treat us badly. Personally, I have been thrown out of a hostel many times. To continue my work, to enter a hostel or to take someone from a hostel for walk outside, I have had to pay, to buy some „presents“. They began to tolerate me when they saw I could pay. Paradoxically, I had to pay to help someone.

How did your projects start?

I've been studying psychology so naturally I have always been interested in such work. One day I bought some cassette-player, a few cassettes and I decided to start the work in the hostels. I used to come there during weekends, when there were no doctors there, and I began my work with two persons. For about one



year nobody knew about me. The first two persons quickly became a group of 20 people! I used to come more often and they finally found out about me. The problems strated, they forbade me coming and working in the hostels. It took another year before we made an agreement with doctors and we started cooperating with them. At this moment I am doing workshops and trainings for the doctors!

Do you know any other groups in Belarus which are having similar projects?

Not really, at least not such projects. There are some people, really few of them, who are trying to organise financial help from the West, mainly from Germany. However it is not seldom that later the money disappear or they don't reach the hostels. The system of caring about the „patients“ looks like this that there are some workers of the hostels but they don't treat the work seriously. For them it is just the warranty of the regular income. They are happy that they don't have to do almost anything, that they don't have to be responsible for something. They have no duties. In another words hundreds of people, some of them really needing help, are just left alone. They just vegetate in the hostels until they die...

How is with people in your project? Are you looking for new people?

Yes, of course we are looking for new people. We always need help. The thing is that our work is really hard, people are coming but they are going quickly away, usually after a year, so there is constant rotation in our group. You need to be really devoted to stay.

How exactly does your work look like? Are the effects of your work noticeable?

Our work is organised as a workshop. People come to the studio to make something together, paint for example. These are normal activities, we treat them also normally, because they are „normal“ in most cases. sometimes I have the feeling that they are in better condition than I am .). They don't need any special treatment, we just meet to talk with each other. However exactly such basic contact is something they need mostly. they don't feel left alone

anymore. In the hostels there are usually no social contacts, no feelings. There are no friendship, no love, there is only some kind of a fight, a fight to survive. During the work in



the studio they become conscious of the feelings, the contact with others, being needed by someone else. The changes are noticeable. Most of the people with whom I started were really closed, their lives were just vegetation. Now they are open, they do a lot of things themselves, they are doing the things consciously, they live. What helped them was a normal contact with us, meetings, talking.

Can you tell us something more about the situation of psychiatry and psychological care in Minsk?

There is a new project considering such hostels. They want to build a huge complex outside of the city where all the people from all Belarussian hostels (!!) would be moved. Such idea is just exactly an



opposite idea to tho in the West. There they try to make their homes resembling normal homes, family homes. They live in very small groups. Here the government want to put them all in one place and forget about the problem. Another characteristic thing is the lack of personnel, either the doctor or the nurses. There is usually one psychiatrist for approximately 120 „patients“. There

are no psychologists or pedagogues. Psychiatry is always the last on the government's list with finances. Why invest in such people...

How do „normal“ members of society react at the „mad“/„sick“ ones?

They are scared. When they meet an „anormal“ person they feel guilty inside. It often turns into distance or aggression.

What do you think about the medicines, the chemicals?

I think that the psychotherapy may completely replace the chemical therapy. In some cases yet medication are necessary, at least for some time. However you really need to know how and for how long to use them. Then they can help. We have quite an opposite situation in Belarus. Lukashenko wants that the medication used in the hostels to be the cheapest ones and they must be Belarussian. The Belarussian chemicals are really not good, they are dirty, they cause serious side effects. Often they just destroy other organs. The doctors in the hostels have no choice, they have to prescribe only these ones. As an example of the absurd and cruel situation in the hostels I want to tell you about two chemicals. To cure schizophrenia you use two chemicals together – Galoperidol and Ciklodol. The first one is the main medication but it causes some side effects like convulsion. The second one is the special co-chemical that reduce the side effects of Galoperidol. Some time ago there was no Ciklodol in the hostels but the doctors didn't stop giving Galoperidol. The people taking this could barely walk for about two months! This is just the perfect example for how psychiatry works in Belarus.

Do you know if some people from the scene are living in the hostels?

None, but you know it can always change ;-). Some activists and other persons from the scene have usually problems with depression so it happens that they are in hospitals for some time. This is normal. I just want to add that punks are the best workers for the hostels. They are not prejudiced and they are tolerant. They just treat the „patients“ as equals. It works.

Whoever Protests is Sent to the Crazy House

The Russian Law on Psychiatry and its Consequences

One of the first laws passed in "new Russia" at the beginning of the 90's due to pressure from democratic powers was the law on psychiatry, which allowed involuntary commitment only on the grounds of a court decision in approval of a medical evaluation stating that the patient poses a significant threat to himself or others.

Russian journalist Larissa Arap publicly criticized conditions in the psychiatric hospital of Murmansk in mid-June. In the article named "Madhouse" and published in the opposition newspaper "March of the unsatisfied" (OGF) she describes torture-like methods of therapy for children and adolescents in the psychiatric ward of the hospital of Murmansk. Based on interviews with parents she reported tormenting and humiliating treatments, in particular the application of electroshocks. The OGF, led by former world chess champion Garri Kasparov, had organized several anti-Putin demonstrations in spring, among other major cities as well in Murmansk. Larissa Arap is a member of the local organization.

On July 5, 2007 Larissa went to the district polyclinic to get copies of a medical evaluation required for renewing her driving license. When the doctor recognizes her patient as author of the critical article, she called the police. Consequently, Larissa Arap was forcibly brought to

the secure psychiatric ward in the capital of the area, Murmansk, in an ambulance, with police escort.

When her husband Dmitri and her daughter Tasiya learned about the involuntary commitment, they set off for the hospital immediately, yet were denied any more detailed information. Her daughter asked for an explanation and a doctor confronts her with criticism of her mother's article as being "abnormal" and even threatens further detention. Only two days later, they are granted a visit to



Larissa Arap

Larissa in hospital. She is hardly able to stand on her feet, and even less capable of producing coherent sentences—she had been injected with unidentified medication, she says. They need to carry her back to her bed.

The following five days Larissa protests with a hunger strike against

her committal. 24 July 2007 she is transferred to the ward of the neighboring city of Apatity, Murmansk area. It is a hospital for seriously mentally ill people, from which hardly anyone is ever released. On the 30th of July, 2007 Larissa is allowed to contact her relatives by telephone: The doctors had managed her to keep her in there for much longer. The authorities denied the accusation to have committed Arap for political reasons.

After Russian human rights activists, Reporters Without Borders, the World Association of Newspapers and the World Editors Forum protested to the Russian president Vladimir Putin on the 8th of August 2007 against the proceedings of the administration and compared them to practices in Soviet times, Larissa Arap was eventually released after six weeks of forced stay in wards.

Original article courtesy of the Berlin-based homeless' newspaper "strassen|feger",

author - Constanze translated by ge

remark of translator: actually the OGF (United citizens' front) is only one party in the "Other Russia" coalition, which organizes the Marches of the unsatisfied and publishes the named newspaper translator: as mentioned before the OGF only participated in the organization

Indymedia VS. Mental Health in a Sick Society

Attempting to describe Moldovan realities

On 20th of September in Chisinau, at the Expozitional Center Brancusi, a presentation by Indymedia was held. The presentation focused on introducing the foundational concepts of Indymedia. It was organized and run by a team of local activists working in conjunction with Indymedia activists from Romania.

The presentation included a brief description about what Indymedia is, how it was created and how it developed over time. The local example, www.romania.indymedia.org was also presented, with a special focus on core principles and values of the Romanian Indymedia team. The presentation was followed by a series of films, the movies presented were made by different indymedia video groups.

This was the first presentation by Indymedia in Moldova. In general, the anarchist movement in Moldova is almost non-existent, for reasons that can be traced back, deep into the mentality of the people and their history (i.e. agricultural characteristics of the country, small scale industrialization, prevalence of rural communities, independence first achieved in 1991).

Additionally, the "leftist" ideology pays its dues to the almost 50 years of domination by the Communist party. Thus, everything "leftist" is associated with the Communists, and automatically takes on a bad image. All the Socialist parties and organizations are unable to bring about something new.

Notwithstanding, Moldova is the

only country in Europe whose Communist Party is the leading power in their government, which was won in free elections. The Communist Party won this position by taking advantage of the people who were disappointed by the Democratic parties that were at power from 1991 - 2001. Though, not much changed, the party itself being unable to come with a strong and clear ideology, but at the same time, monopolizing the left wing ideology.

Somehow the society in Moldova is sick. It is sick in its way of formulating an independent self-identity to create its own way of evolution.

But I see this not like a mortal disease, but more like a cure for "immunity". Society and people in Moldova are undergoing a time of heavy trans-

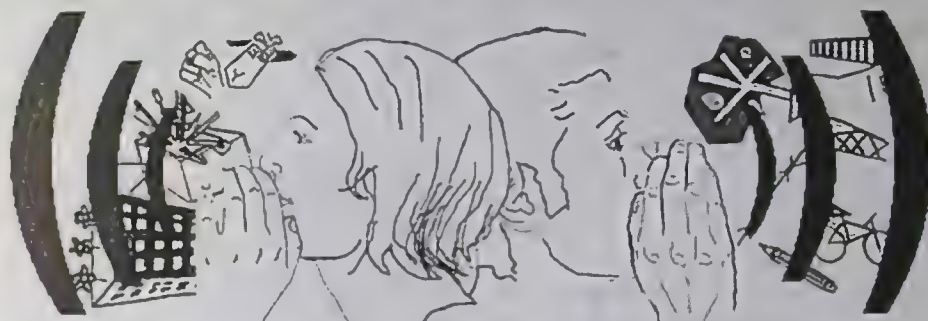
formation, I will try to give an example from my life: the village I was born in has changed dramatically. In fact, the village I knew when I was a child has vanished, the present day village is quite the opposite. The old village was a rural community with people working mainly on local farms, the people were more focused on village reality rather than on things outside of the village. In general, it was a self-sufficient community. Now, because of the lack of work, people have left for other places and countries. The village itself is no longer self-sufficient. The villagers have become some kind of proletarian people and are shifting more towards the urban areas. This is a first for contemporary Moldova. During the Soviet Union, the factory workers were mainly brought from Slavic republics and settled in the cities, thus having little interaction with Moldovan, in modo grosso, I can say that Moldovan and Russian parts of society were somehow separated, with each group going through its own transformation - for example, after independence the Russian speakers moved towards business

and commerce, Moldovans moved more towards the industrial jobs and services).

Now, in Moldova we are moving towards a postindustrial society, with all its benefits and drawbacks. A great benefit is, without a doubt, the mass-media.

Since 1991, everybody has fought for a free press, nobody succeeded, not during the "so called" Democrats, and no way during the Communists. The interest in such a mass-media project for the people lays in the fact that there is a need for "free", (like "free" from "freedom") information, because the present state can easily control the flow of information and news received by regular people. For

example, in a state like Moldova - young, which only just gained independence, with an even younger, small scale media penetration, the only chance to be heard is through TV stations that are heavily controlled by the state, (through diverse tools, like: license, taxing, etc). There is an extremely small chance of getting alternative news and information. The only ways to receive different news, (I mean not the news you see on almost all TV channels, with the same images and comments) is internet. Though, despite incredible growth in last few years, there still is a low penetration rate in rural areas and amongst poor people.



Symptoms of an Anarchist Crisis After 30 Years

You feel that the movement is standing in one place

On the one hand you expect from the movement continuous progress. But, on the other hand, you are personally are getting less and less involved into this movement (other reason: burn out). You are in a danger of ending up as an old anarchist, criticizing everything around yourself and by that, excusing your total passivity.

You are fed up of activist subculture and accessories

You are not anymore interested in patches, zines, soli-parties, punk-concert, leaflets, stickers and so on. Anarchist movements, at least in Europe, are standing on the backs of subculture(s) and activity of alternative youth. An important part of the movement is to meet friends, people with similar opinions, interests, lifestyle and age. Hanging around inside this subculture, where everyone is, "different" in the same way can have positive and negative effects.

You recognize, that people of your age have disappeared from the movement

Maybe not all of them became mainstream, capitalist bourgeois, but continue living by their anarchist principles in their families and working places? That path can also make a huge change to the world around you. But maybe, after years of struggling and organizing at many levels from personal to international, you question if it is rather a step backwards?

You don't personally progress in the anarchist movement anymore

After using anarchist movements for years for your personal development: learning new skills, getting to know new ideas, actions, people, places and so on, you get bored, when the movement is not giving you something new all the time. Even so, you can continue sharing your skills with others in the movement.

You finally want to be considered as an adult in society

You might find the solution in a career change, or, family life. Even by becoming an alcoholic, you can at least get rid of this feeling of being an everlasting teenager in society. But even after taking on all of the emotions of finally being a responsible adult, you still miss something from the past.

Is there an improvement from the anarchist crisis?

Our movement, at least in Eastern Europe, lacks forms of activity from people, who have grown out of their youth, from subcultures, and from big actions. We should create new forms of activity for ourselves and for our movement for the people that are tired of non-stop, disposable actions, and become ready to do more long term projects, more seriously and more responsibly. We need to create collective projects for adult anarchists. What might they be?

Marta - Russia



Mental Health - A Matter of Definition

Mental Health

*Power brings forth social inequality,
Inequality brings forth crimes!
Power, in order to justify the existing inequality,
puts people into prisons and mental asylums!*

*Prisons and mental asylums do not correct,
they destroy individuality!
A revolution not finishing off with prisons and
mental asylums
is not a revolution to the end!*

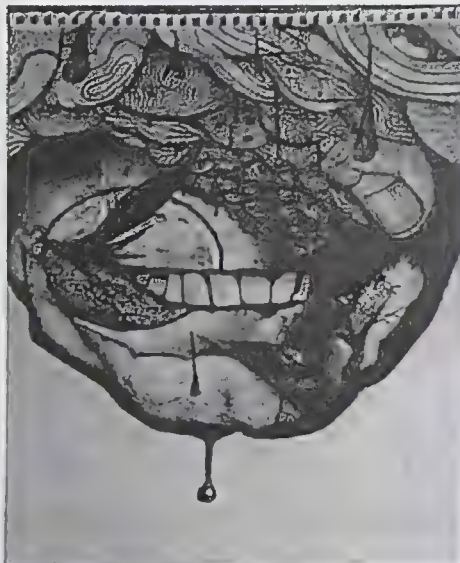
**-band "Change the world
without taking power" (Moscow)**

Diversions from psychological norm are not an easy topic. As for every question directly effecting (at least some) peoples' lives there are numerous approaches to it, some widely approved by, some popular only in rather small circles. Due to the complexity of the issue and the wide range of contradictions even between parties involved in the same part of the process (means, it is not just "patients vs. doctors" or anything as simplistic as that) I do not claim, not even intend to thoroughly cover the subject - my intention is rather to give a rough idea of two opposing concepts, attempting to outline some basic lines of criticism on each of them. The essay will remain quite scetchy, there will remain many questions unattended and most problems unsolved. But problems can hardly be solved by mere writing, so this should be received as an invitation to share experiences and ideas on seldomly dealt with topic.

The first approach to deal with is traditional psychiatry. While witchcraft and demons were the notorious reasons given for patterns of behaviour deviating from a certain tolerance in the middle ages, a common treatment being exorcism, psychiatry in its present form began to be developed in the era of enlightenment. Then, those deviations were defined as mentally induced sickness, which consequently could be dealt with by medical science. When before people considered crazy more often than not ended up in jails, they are now attended to in more specialized ways. Those behavioural digressions are divided into disease patterns and treated in accordance to their estimated severity. The available therapies can be discerned by their mode of action, the way they affect the patients; they range from psychotherapy, which works by verbal and non-verbal communication between therapist and patient, via

medication acting on the hormonal system up to stationary treatment in mental hospitals. Brain surgery (lobotomy) as had been used till about the middle of the past century is generally regarded as outdated in the meantime. The procedure, which consists in cutting the connections between certain parts of the brain,

had often resulted in major personality changes or mental retardation. Widely applied, however, is a non-intrusive technique known as Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT), especially used for the treatment of severe depressions where drugs show



no or little effect. Yet it is put to use with other indications as schizophrenia or mania as well. For the therapy seizures¹ are induced with electricity. Its side-effects include confusion and memory loss for the period of the therapy, yet in some cases also persistent memory losses have occurred.

Criticism on psychiatry is uttered on different levels: In some cases the application of specific treatments is put to question because their effectiveness is doubted or the side-effects are considered too harmful. Another focus of critique is about involuntary commitment and forced treatment, which may be used in most countries if a person is considered a risk for himself or others. Critics argue that there should be a right to refuse treatment as exists for "ordinary" diseases, that you cannot be forced to be cured from cancer for instance. Furthermore,

they cite incidents of abuse, when political opponents were forcedly committed (compare for instance *Who protests is put to the crazy house* in this issue of ABB). On the other hand psychiatry can enable people to shuffle off responsibility for their actions by declaring them mad.

The most profound point brought against traditional psychiatry is, as a matter of fact, challenging the very concept of mental illness. Is there anything like mental "normality" at all, it asks. Who is to define that norm and with what interests? In how far can a diagnosis be justified if even the definition of mental illness are subject to significant change? A historical example is the mental disease drapetomania "discovered" by American physician Samuel A. Cartwright, who claimed it to be the reason for black slaves to flee captivity. It was supposed to be the result of masters making "themselves too familiar with [slaves], treating them as equals", whipping was supposed an effective remedy; today hardly anyone could put forward such ideas and expect to be taken seriously (or so one should hope). A more topical instance of diverging definitions is the way homosexuality is looked at. Even today there are groups professing that homosexuality is a consequence of mental disorder, which can and should be "cured", e.g. the National Association for Research & Therapy of Homosexuality (NARTH). Evidently, the classification of certain personality traits is at least in parts highly political and dependent on the kind of society putting forth the norms for categorization.

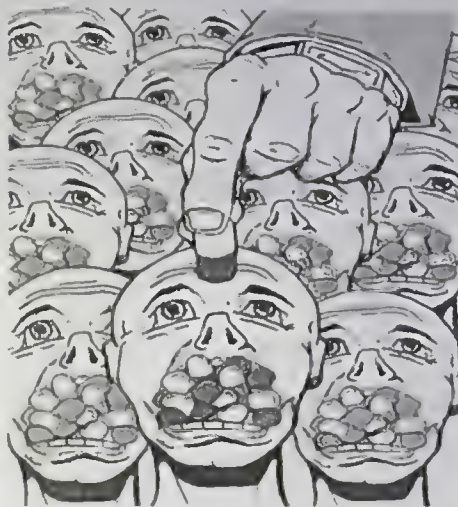
The works of Michel Foucault on societal norms and their implementation by means of mental institutions and prisons, e.g. his *"Madness and Civilization: a History of Insanity in the Age of Reason"*, both base on the idea that "normality" is a largely arbitrary construct as well as helped forming significant parts of the theoretical grounds in that direction, on which the so-called antipsychiatric movement builds.

Antipsychiatry is an umbrella term for a number of movements challenging theories and practices of mainstream psychiatry. Some of them altogether deny the existence of mental disturbances, according to their claim socially diverting and unadjusted behaviour becomes a sickness only through acceptance of the role of the "sick patient", imposed

on him/her by prejudiced, depreciating society. Thus, not only (forced) hospitalization and treatment, but even diagnosis of mental disturbances is fiercely attacked. One of the main representatives of that fundamental disputation is the US-based psychiatrist Thomas Szasz. Anyway, he resolutely refuses the denomination "antipsychiatrist", because "a medic criticising forced treatments in dermatology wouldn't be called anti-dermatologist". Another glimpse on the topic offered Ronald David Laing. He suggested, that strange behaviour and seemingly senseless speech were attempts to express worries or concerns, inexpressible or not allowed to be articulated, that "madness" could even be transformative episodes. He never denied the existence of mental maladies, but maintained that the behavioural patterns and utterances of persons considered mentally disturbed were not senseless, but had, on the contrary, a clear meaning understandable only in the context of the person's very situation. Consequently, he maintained for example: "The experience and behavior that gets labeled schizophrenic is a special strategy that a person invents in order to live in an unlivable situation." He also resisted the label "antipsychiatrist", but other than Szasz he did not argue the need for treatment, but criticised the fact, that traditional psychiatry diagnosed on the base of conduct, while treatment was supposed to be biological - according to Laing an irreconcilable contradiction. There are also theories implying conspiracies by interested parties, i.e. here pharmaceutical companies which try to keep a good market for their products running.

One of the organizations insistently maintaining that theory has got quite an experience in conspiracies, maybe they also want to turn down some competitors in the quest for consumers' wealth. It is the Church of Scientology (CoS), which together with Szasz has founded the Citizens Commission on Human Rights (CCHR) - which Szasz says does not make him a Scientologist. He maintains that this is mere collaboration against a common woe,

that is forced psychiatry. It remains to the thinking reader to assess the efforts of Scientology, if they might not be aimed at recruiting new believers. Anyway, it is curious that Scientology is quite active on that field; so active that many organizations, not (officially at least) connected to the CoS, apply rather strange vocabulary and methods



reminding of the CoS' "fair play" in crusades against critics on their way of criticism on psychiatry.

This policy implying a dogmatism and exclusiveness often blamed on traditional psychiatry by antipsychiatrists takes from the attraction their ideals of fighting coercion might have from a libertarian perspective. Of course, on should not make the mistake of taking either one of the groups for homogenous, there are differing tendencies on both sides. A problem concerning the more fundamental wing of psychiatry critics is the mentioned complete negation of mental diseases. To some extent the argument might be correct about talking people into certain behavioural patterns by "stigmatizing" with denominations and the linked stereotypes (a literary example can be found in Max Frisch's "Andorra"). Yet I hold it to be dangerous and irresponsible to deny the fact that there are people experiencing mental problems, however they be called, which can be alleviated in a large number of cases by means of the sometimes over-demonized therapies. This demonization potentially leads people to misunderstand their situation, possibly making them miss

chances for an improvement of their condition, which can, as a matter of fact, be achieved by "traditional" means as well.

As for forced treatment, we've got a tough topic at hand indeed. From an emancipative point of view one tends, with good reasons I would say, to reject any notion of it beforehand. Yet a strange feeling remains if it is not possible that once one might fight oneself in a situation, when one poses a threat to oneself or even to one's fellow beings. Would not I be grateful in retrospect if someone gave me back, say, zest for life or prevented me from doing harm to someone else, even if that happened against my will in that moment? There can be no general answer on such a question and by no means will I make the mistake to give one. Yet I feel compelled to admit that there might be cases in which I would prefer to have others deal with me against my will, than to have myself, for instance, committing acts, which now I would condemn.

To find a satisfactory solution or if anyhow possible to avoid such wretched situations neither stubbornly applying traditional treatment nor dogmatic "antipsychiatry" seem of use to me. A sound communication between patients, therapists and relatives or otherwise involved persons needs to be established to determine sensitive ways of dealing with mental discomfort in every single case. And not only between them, generally, awareness must be raised for the right for weakness. Away from the ideals of a society based on rivalry - thus causing undue pressure, depression and distress - and towards a better understanding of each one's responsibility in a solidaric society. Because, as Aristotele claimed, man is a civic animal (*zoon politikon*), freedom means - instead of having laws and institutions posing general rules of behaviour, letting some direct the actions of others - to take responsibility for our own actions and for our fellow beings' wellbeing; as the saying goes: If you are not part of the cure, then you are part of the problem.

gfkpht

Footnotes:

1. A seizure is a temporary abnormal electro-physiologic phenomenon of the brain, resulting in abnormal synchronization of electrical neuronal activity. It can manifest as an alteration in mental state, tonic or clonic movements, convulsions, and various other psychic symptoms (such as déjà vu or jamais vu). It is caused by a temporary abnormal electrical activity of a group of brain cells. The medical syndrome of recurrent, unprovoked seizures is termed epilepsy, but some seizures may occur in people who do not have epilepsy. (taken from en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seizure, 11 October 2007)
2. "Fair game. May be deprived of property or injured by any means by any Scientologist without any discipline of the Scientologist. May be tricked, sued or lied to or destroyed." - HCOPL (Hubbard Communications Office Policy Letter 18 October 67 Issue IV, Penalties for Lower Conditions

Abolishing the Borders



No Border Camp in the Ukraine

From 10th till 20th of August 2007 a No Border Camp took place in the Ukraine. We asked two of the organisers about their experiences, following you'll find the interview with them.

More informations about the camp, some actions and Pavshino you can find at:
<http://deletetheborder.org/node/2294> and
<http://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2007/08/378802.html>

Interview with Organisers of the Camp

How where your personal impressions of the camp? Which kind of feedbacks you got from the participants?

K: As for person who was involved in organizational work of No Border camp it is difficult for me to estimate the situation, results, whole camp. So I can't give analysis of the whole camp. Only my thoughts and feeling about some aspects.

There was much stress during the preparation period and camp for the organizers. For example I couldn't concentrate on the workshops and I spent much time and energy so that people could feel comfortable as much as possible...

I saw many problems, conflicts, uncomfortable situations.. There was much misunderstanding and many conflicts between activists who were involved in preparation and between organizers and participants. Sometimes situation was really hot and I personally had much stress and hard tensions.

Also, I felt some sexist pressure due to which I couldn't feel comfortable and I put much energy to cope with this problem. It was a big problem and we tried to attract attention to it and in a way, it was successful.

Of course I've got some personal feedbacks from quite many people during the camp. People just came to me and said what they liked or not. Or they were trying to discuss situations. Many of participants were almost satisfied. Everybody liked the place, but as there were different people, they liked different moments of the camp. But same time there quite many moments and situation people didn't like. During the camp, we ran into several conflicts. People judged according to situation

and a country where they live. There was much misunderstanding in several situations, like about nazis, police and leadership. For somebody, this camp was too closed as a ghetto and people were waiting for more open space and actions.

Also I think some people expected something which at the end, didn't



happen. So they were disappointed, sad, angry.

Many Eastern European activists found the camp a very suitable place in terms of networking and they were really happy after they took part in it. For many of them, it was the first such experience and possibility to see how such gatherings can look like, how we can live and work together with each other. To a certain extent, it was a realization of their ideas and imagination of their lives.

A: Personally, I feel very good that it's all over now. I feel very big relief because of this.

I am not satisfied with this camp and didn't really like the way it was. Most of all, perhaps because I as organiser couldn't really enjoy the time there due to too much pressure and responsibili-

ties. Our prep team was very small - only 6 people and the project we were doing was very huge. I can say it was the biggest thing we have ever done together. And all the organisational moments with a camp were not that easy going, you may heard

about problems with a camp place we had and so on. So at the first day the camp started I was so tired and exhausted that the camp life itself was already not interested to me. And later on all the problems that appeared during the camp pissed me off much more than they could and it was much harder for me to deal with them.

One strange thing that I didn't expect - is that I didn't have a chance to get to know any of participants. At all. Only those how came to help with a camp earlier. But later, when there were hundreds of people - I hardly talked to anybody and I think people also didn't really notice me there. So in the main goal of the camp - to build better relationship between activist - I personally failed.

Would you do s.th. different, if you would organize at any time a next no-border-camp?

K: I can't say I want to take part in organization of one more 'No Border' camp :) Maybe, I'll be interested in organizing of the camp (or other event) on other topic which can be more important for me personally (antisexism, feminism). I think I have quite good experience with organizing such an event now and how to avoid some problems. Of course this camp gave me big experience of how to make some things better, what count during preparations. I can't say now what exactly I would change in my steps if I knew about it before camp. I need time to analyze it.

A: I'm sorry I cannot answer this, I'm

too messed up.

Were there any outcomes of the workshops and meetings?

K: Unfortunately, I can't give an overall image of all activities which took in and out of the camp. I wasn't involved in program preparation and I couldn't visit many workshops. But as far as I know few projects should be started in region (Transcarpathia) and hopefully, people exchanged their contacts and had some ideas about how they could cooperate.

A: I also didn't have opportunities to participate in many workshop and watch for their results. But I believe there were many good of them and it was very important that they took place in the end of the day.

There have been about 300 activists from approximately 20 countries. Did cultural differences between the activists play a role in the course of the camp?

A: Well, of course it did. I can talk about it from organiser's point of view. The camp took place in Ukraine, eastern european country, in Transcarpathia - the most tricky and unknown region for most of us. And it was very important to be very delicate in everything we were doing there. Of course only if we wanted to do more things in that region in the future, didn't want our local partners to have more problems because of us and really wanted to help other people. That's why from the very beginning we declared that it wasn't going to be a radical camp with no confrontational actions. Besides we had to deal very much with all kinds of local authorities and we had personal responsibilities for everything going on around camp. But may be it wasn't the way other noborder camps were arranged before or what people expected or the way they used to do things back home. So we had few stupid incidents - like burning flag from the cityhall at the main square of the city or fucking drinking parties in the nearest village. Such things, it seems, didn't really mean much to many of participants but effected us as organisers quite a lot. This is one point.

Another.. Well, can we call macho sexist approach of some participants as a cultural difference? If so, than yes, cultural differences played a big role in the camp and I believe that there very many people who felt if not oppressed than at least uncomfortable there. Sometimes it was really too much of

malish jokes, comments, screams, laughter and oppinions.

K: There was an invisible border between Russian and English speaking participants and somehow it disturbed the whole atmosphere of the camp. I think there was miscommunication and the lack of comprehension because of cultural differences or different level of activists' experiences in different countries. But it was also good that the problem had been risen and that people could confront it.

Beside the camp you have organised a no border festival in the nearby city Uzhgorod. What were the reasons for having two such big events in the same time and was it effective?

A: Actually it wasn't the original idea to make these two things at the time. The festival part appeared only few months before the camp started and grew from a street action into a two days concert at Uzhgorod main square, week-long film screening, press-conferences, training for journalists and so on.

The idea came up not even from a member of our prep team. The thing was that me personally and few more people were also involved in some youth project and our task was to arrange some international seminar in Ukraine. So we decided to combine this



No Borders in Ukrainian, Russian and English

seminar and no-border camp and make them at the same place at the same time otherwise we just couldn't do it. Later we found out that some of the participants from the seminar were actually a straight edge band (MCD [Sweden]) and they wanted to play a concert. I brought it up at camp prep meeting and we just decided that we could expand this idea and invite more bands. Then we figured out that one day concert is not enough anymore as we invited so many musicians. Later on we found more people and partner organisations who could help us with doing things - so the film festival appeared and other things.

And I'm very glad that it went in this way. I think that it was very good public event that really shook the city and brought up many topics of the camp. It's hard to evaluate the influence of that festival but it's definitely bigger than if there just only a camp took place.

K: The reason was to get people attracted to the topic which is current for them (refugees, racism, borders...). The festival comprised of screenings, concerts and discussions. We tried to rise these questions up to show people that the immigrants are people just like them. And as I see now, it was also useful for the youth in Uzhgorod (not only activists' scene). I have some feedback from there that people were really touched by the topic, by activists who came, by events. They could see that there are some things to do (maybe, new for them) and think about them.

If there have been any partner organisations in organising the camp or the festival, how did you cooperate?

K: There were few organizations that were helping us and taking part in preparation. And also making parallel actions. There were seminars of sobriety organization in Uzhgorod, going on simultaneously with the camp. The people active in these organizations are mostly our friends and we made the first concert in the city together. Through games and educational activities, they were trying to attract attention to the possibility of living drug-free. There were also few human rights organizations helping us.

A: Yes, of course there very many organisations who were helping us a lot, however I wouldn't mention them here. Without our partners there would be no camp, no festival, no nothing. So I'm very thankful for everybody who were helping us with things.

How we cooperated?.. Well, basically very much depended on personal contacts. Some of us involved other organisations they were participating in, some of organisations were of actual partners for activities we do in Kiev, some were people or organisations we didn't know before but who shared our ideas and got interested in camp and festival. And the help they provided us with was also very different - from financial support, to easier contacts with people and authorities, finding a camp place, help with solving local problems and taking part in our activities.

It was a very great experience and I think we managed to do it well.

Account of Experiences in the Detention Camp Pavshino, Transcarpathia

What follows is a text from one ancient prisoner of the Pavshino detention camp, part of the EU border regime in the Ukraine

Dear friends,

I'm a refugee from Palestine seeking asylum from persecution in my country. I was detained in the Pavshino Camp in the Transcarpathian region of Ukraine. On behalf of my fellows, I'd like to share with you my experience and circumstances in the camp.

After a long journey of eight days at sea, living in hunger and thirst and being affected by sickness, we (me and others "refugees on the same boat") eventually arrived to Ukraine. My boat landed on shore at Port Odessa and at night we were taken away by a car. We got to Kiev in nine hours and two days later we crossed the Slovakian border. After 12 hours walking into Slovakia we were detained by the Slovakian police and although we asked for asylum in Slovakia, we were returned to Ukraine on the same night.

When we got to Ukraine, we were taken to Pavshino. There we were stripped naked of our clothes and the border guards took all our money, mobiles, personal stuff, what have you. The border guards do not return any of the stuff back to the refugees, but it can be later bought back from them for money. Then we were thrown into a crowded building where there was no place to sleep. I myself had to sleep on the very dirty floor like many others in that miserable place, in Pavshino.

Conditions in Pavshino are inhuman. There is no clean drinking water and we have to drink from a rusty pipe that brings water to the heating system of the border guard building. (Caritas, an Austrian organization provides 200 liters of clean drinking water a week for more than 500 refugees.) The toilets are flooded all the time, since there is no water in the toilets. The food is full of dust and most of the time we couldn't wash our dishes because the water from the heating system of the border guards building was not running. I've seen many fights between inmates in Pavshino because of the water. We can see when a car is bringing a 200 liter tank of drinking water and as soon as we hear it coming in the camp, everyone grabs a bottle or whatever they can find and starts running and getting ready to fight for every drop of water. The tank has two taps that everyone fights over. Usually, the soldiers are just standing aside watching and taking photos of the fights on their mobile phones.

Whoever is sick in Pavshino cannot even get access to proper medical aid. The answer from the border guard's nurse, who is not always present in the camp, is that they don't have any medicine except "Panadol" or "Paracetamol", which is provided by Caritas. A Caritas doctor visits the camp once a month and brings with him this Panadol or Paracetamol. But if without even these simple painkillers for the rest

of the month. When I was in the camp, a couple of people were very ill and we asked the border guard's nurse to check them out. But he said that he is not a doctor and can't advise us on anything. He said we would have to wait for the big Caritas doctor. But these two guys were very ill, so we asked if they could be moved to a hospital. The nurse then told us that he wanted some money to send a text message to the hospital nearby so that they could send an ambulance. Some days later, the two guys were moved to the hospital, but one of them died there. I guess it was too late for him. But I hear he wasn't the only one who died in a hospital after getting sick in Pavshino.

For legal aid, you get a visit from a lawyer who gives you a form to fill out in your native language. The lawyer takes the form and hands it to the border guard's chief office in the camp and within 4 to 6 months, the immigration office prepares an interview for you if you asked for asylum in that form. There are no translators provided for this interview that has to be conducted in your native language and so you have to pay for your own translator. I paid \$400, but I saw others pay up to \$1000 for a private translator, depending on the language. In the process, neither the lawyers nor the translators explain our status according to the Ukrainian laws and that leaves us with a combination of isolation and uncertainty, all we know about laws is what we learn from older inmates and its all speculations, you hear many different advices from different inmates about what is going to happen to you, we ask the lawyers but as I said they give you nothing, the private translators refuse to talk to you unless you pay, and when you pay them they tell you not to concern yourself about anything and that they will handle everything, you paid didn't you, so you'll get your "freedom"...

Having been detained in this camp for almost 5 months myself, I was always in fear of being deported. I also strongly felt that there would be no agencies or organizations working there to support or help us in case we were jailed or harassed. My mind and heart were always pre-occupied with the fear of persecution, day and night. This was how I had felt in my homeland and it was actually why I left my country and sought asylum in the first place.

I see that many inmates even after leaving Pavshino feel broken by the experience and what they had to go through. Some feel ashamed of the whole thing. I believe that it is because we were treated like criminals.

I believe that in sharing my experiences will shade a light on what is going inside Pavshino that may help Human rights Advocates in the fight against such cruel treatment of people who their "crime" is seeking asylum...

Thank you very much for your time reading through this letter.

My best wishes to you all.

More info about the prison at
<http://pavshino.antira.info>

Introduction to the Dept. of Migration Interview

In August 2007, a NoBorder camp took place in Uzgorod, Ukraine near the Slovakian and Hungarian border. The initiative of this camp was made by Russian and Ukrainian activists. In this area, detention-centers for refugees and migrants exist, (in Muchakenko for women, in Pavshino and in Chop for men). It is the European policy to try to prevent migrants/refugees from entering the European Union and they put pressure on bordering countries to chase and detain refugees/migrants. The closed detention centers in the Ukraine are supported by the EU and it is well-known that their conditions are catastrophic. The camps are partly far away in former military housing areas; water and food are poor and not enough and the hygienic conditions are bad.

When we think of the closed border policy of the EU, dramatic images arise of people drowning in the mediterranean, starving in the desert or living in closed camps in southern Europe or northern Africa. The eastern borders are blocked off and western and eastern activist have poor information about what really happens. The NoBorder camp was a first start to sensitize ourselves and inform each other about the effects of institutional racism in Eastern Europe. We learned that violations of human rights are normal and that the EU puts a lot of effort into securing these borders. Detention-centers with extremely bad conditions are a part of this policy.

On the 18th of August, the participants of the camp organized a day of action in Uzghorod and also at the detention camps:

First of all, a small group of demonstrators drove to the Pavshinov detention camp. The detainees were outside and seemed really pleased to see that other people outside hadn't forgotten them. Messages of solidarity were exchanged amidst the music. It was a small group visiting, since it was feared that if the border guards suspected that a confrontation was likely, then the detainees could face extra punishments. The group then proceeded to the Mocachevo detention camp, where women and children are detained. Unfortunately, here the detainees were not allowed outside so it was unknown whether the solidarity messages could reach them.

Meanwhile, a bigger group of about 150 camp participants left for Uzghorod, the immigration offices from which the camps are run. Banners reading "Close down

Pavshinov" and "Free the Prisoners of the EU" and "Freedom of Movement" in Ukrainian and English were unfurled. Leaflets about the camps, the immigration offices and the objective of No Borders were handed out to staff and passers-by. The Red and Black flag was flown from the building and the banners were unfurled from the roof. Round the back, demonstrators decorated the building with anarchist slogans in Ukrainian, Russian and English.

The demonstrators then moved on into the town centre, graffitiing as they went. Particular attention was paid to the government buildings on the way. Here the EU flag was removed from its mast. The demonstrators walked through the town, still leafleting, still shouting, and attracting a lot of attention from passers-by. Demonstrations in Uzghorod are rare, apparently.

The demonstration ended in the town's main square, where there is a small stage. The banners were again

displayed and the EU flag was ceremoniously burned.

During the action at the office of immigration services, an activist made an interview with one of the employees there. So now, for the first time, it happens that we, as the ABB collective, give the words of a state official space in this magazine. We attracted lots of interest in some of the information from this interview, but it definitely has to be handled with



care... In this text, the Ukrainian system of getting asylum is avowed, disregarding the fact that most migrants/refugees don't want to stay in the Ukraine – they aim for western Europe, America, Canada, etc. The EU forces countries like the Ukraine to install a system of asylum – that is the logic of "Fortress Europe". To get out of the detention camps, the people are compelled to seek asylum in a state where they don't have a chance to find a legal job, to feed their families, to live a 'normal' life.

As we know very well what the policies of the EU are and about its pressure on internal and external states and other institutions, we definitely want to stress, that for us, no justification exists for keeping anyone in any sort of prison. We apologize to those of you who may find it disgusting to see an interview with representatives of the state in our magazine, but we hope that most of you understand our intentions. Namely:

Fire to the prisons - fire to the state!

TRANSCRIPT of an Interview with Department of Migration, Ukraine (Continued from Introduction on Previous Page)

Amy: What is the official position of Ukraine on migration, immigration and refugees?

IM: There is the law on immigration in Ukraine that is new for the country. Migration, immigration, refugee is regulated by the constitution of Ukraine; all immigration laws legislation must follow the law. According to constitution of Ukraine, each foreigner has the right to ask for refugee status. Also questions about migration, immigration and refugee in Ukraine are regulated by the next laws: "About legal status of foreigners in Ukraine", "About citizenship in Ukraine", "About immigration", "About refugees", "About freedom of movement (migration) and free choice of place of living".

The department of migration is busy in execution only one law from above – this is the law "About refugees" which acts from June 2002. Also the Ukrainian law has many articles about regulations, foundations from the Geneva Convention "About refugees". The second law came into act January 2002; it follows the Geneva Convention on Refugees. The Ukrainian laws follow all the acts in the Geneva Convention.

Amy: In the last couple weeks we visited places Mukachevo, Chop. Everyone wanted to enter into Western Europe, why are the detention centers on the side of Ukraine, not on the side of Western Europe, Slovakia or Hungary?

IM: This is not jurisdiction of my department – our rights and duties are regulated by law. We deal only with refugees who ask for refugee status. When people have the appropriate documents they can pass through, it is only those without the proper paper work who are in detention centers.

HERVE: Can you explain what are the basic procedures that one must go through to become a refugee here?

IM: If you are not legal here, if you came as a non status person, it is only those people who are in the detention centers, they have the right to via a lawyer to write a letter of intention stating that want to be able to stay in Ukraine. We meet with refugee with the interpreter, see the papers, and nearly all foreigners receive the refugee status. There are of course exceptions, when person abuse this procedure – and the decisions sometimes are negative, because they do not have the appropriate documents. But then person can go to the judges



to get a status of refugee – the law decides. There are organizations which can help to get the status of refugee.

Amy: How many people became refugees in Ukraine in the last year or two?

IM: After the laws that came into effect in July 2002, more than 3000 people got refugee status. This year (first 7 months of 2007) were viewed about 650 applications of getting refugee status, last year this figure was 897.

Amy: Do they all pass through the detention center?

IM: In detention centers are only person who tried to pass the border illegal. If a foreigner is in Ukraine without the proper documents or with documents with finished period of validity – this person can easily ask for refugee status in Ukraine. The person can't be deported from Ukraine

until superior court makes a decision. This procedure and the decision of court can be stretched by years.

Amy: And those, that are not accepted, are deported?

IM: Yes, according to the law, they are deported. First we propose that they leave Ukraine by themselves, and they can choose which countries they go through. But if they do not want to leave, then they are deported. But only after the decision of superior courts.

Amy: How many people were deported?

IM: I don't have this information.

Amy: Can they work?

IM: This is regulated by the law that they receive a document that is valid only for 15 days and they don't have right work. But if they take the procedure usually afterwards they can work.

Amy: But it can take a couple years.

IM: Yes.

Amy: And during those years, if there some sort of mechanism in place to help them while they can not work?

IM: The legal status or refugee in the law is solved. good law but the provisions do not include any support or infrastructure for them, not like in Germany, France, Belgium or England. The person that already has the documents that can already stay in Ukraine; it costs only 17 grivnas that is 3 euros, to get the proper documents to work. But refugees with documents have right to get a financial help from their family abroad through by banks – that is the way how they solve their financial problems. The law on work is already declared but it is not well regulated.

There are more than 300'000 from Transcarpathia who go to work in Europe. They will work in Russia and Europe. And there are always prob-

lems with languages, and I don't see that the refugees want to work -this is my personal opinion.

Amy: *Do you know how many immigrants are in detention centers?*

IM: Did you visit Pavshino?

Amy: *Is this possible?*

IM: In camp there are 500 people. In Mukachevo there is a camp for women and children for 70 people but I don't know how many there are at the moment.

Amy: *Why Ukraine decided to have these detention camps?*

IM: Because there is a law "About frontier", also there is administrative codex. This camp only includes people who broke the law and tried to illegally cross the border. Even a Ukrainian cannot just cross the border when he wants. Even they manage to cross the border illegally to Hungary or Slovakia, and then they will be brought back to Ukraine because it is Ukraine who allowed them to pass. Under the law in Ukraine, the people who tried to cross to border or do not have the papers are kept in detention camps until they are deported.

Amy: *Why do you have detention camps? People are indignant about this detention centers? There are countries without detention centers. Amnesty international and human rights have shown that there is much abuse done. The foreigners don't want to be in detention centers.*

IM: In the EU countries there are also "closed" detention centers and I saw these places but not like a detained. Our problem is that these camps are not well organized it is very limited for the illegally in there. And there are too many people in there. The European Union will help us financially to deal with these problems and to have the detention centers. Last year in Helsinki in October was signed as deal between European Union and Ukraine about readmission. They agreed that they will help us pay to

deal with the foreigners, and it is part of the readmission into the European Union and it's expected to help pay for the camps and to have them better equipped. Ukraine could let them (foreigners) to pass through easily to EU, but EU European Union doesn't want them to enter.

HERVE: *How do you see this situation when EU just step aside this problem and leave it for Ukraine?*

IM: It is bad. Ukrainians don't see this



as normal. Me and most of Ukrainians don't want see Ukraine as the detention center country. We have hard geo-political situation because the illegal immigrants consider Ukraine as transit country.

The situation becomes harder because Ukraine has more than 2000 km of "unclosed" border with Belarus and Russia. 90 percent of illegals who tried to cross into the west come from these two countries because our borders with them are wide open. And with Russia we do not have the agreements of readmission, we can't deport them to Russia if they are on Ukrainian territory, and Brussels told us that Russia will have to sign a law in regards to migrates in transit (cut through Ukraine) because it is such a problem.

Amy: *Last question, why does the responsibility to deal with illegal immigrants, refugees fall only to the shoulders of Ukraine and the other countries don't take any responsibility?*

IM: Romania, Poland, Slovakia have detention centers as well, but each country has their specific ways of dealing with it. They turn back to

Ukraine not all people; many people ask for refugee status in these countries. The thing is that European Union helps financially Hungary and Romania around these problems because they are part of the EU and these problems existed before they joined the EU. For example Hungary is 5 times smaller than Ukraine and has (with a help of EU) about 40 detention centers for foreigners, both closed and open models. In Ukraine we have only one open camp in Odessa. But there is no legitimate reason for closed camps. What we have in Pavshino: the frontier guards have to keep people in camps because where else are we going to put them? But according to the law this is not their duties. This detention centers must be under control of Ministry of Internal Affairs.

It is clear that the camp should have better services. It should be just a closed territory where people get some services. Now we see in this detention centers some kind of breach (violation) of human rights and this is horrible,

In Transcarpathia we have begun to construct another camp for 60 people but it is in the budget of Ukraine. It is for people who are waiting on their refugee status, they stay there for free. But if some refugee will not get a status - he must leave this center. This is because many people want to get a status and the center will be filled out in a week.

One open point is build for 50 people in Mukachevo - we plan to accommodate there woman and kids.

Amy: *But what about 4th floor? It is closed.*

IM: The fourth floor is in frontier guard's competence. There stay people without documents. Center for woman and kids is near the river and is not open yet, it is in the process of being built. Those who financed this camp are the European Union, the commissar in questions about refugees of the United Nations (Geneva) and the Italian embassy in Ukraine.

Sorry but now I have to leave and go to see the protestors.

Go West ... Labour and Transit Migration from and Via Transcarpatia, Ukraine

This report talks about the social condition of the people in Transcarpatia and the situation of "transit migrants". Many were held on in camps like Pavshino (men) oder Mukachevo (women and children).

The city of Ushgorod, with about 125 000 inhabitants (1) lies in Transcarpatia, Ukraine, right beside the external EU border between Slovakia and Hungary. For the deterrence experts Frontex (2) this is one of the most important "problem zones for illegal immigration". Transcarpatia is a focal point in a double sense: It's where tens of thousands of Ukrainian workers originate and the transit site for innumerable refugees and migrants from countries of the Global South.

The discrepancies cannot be missed: Visible signs of massive poverty exist even in the eastern regions of Hungary, yet behind the border crossing the situation is even worse. The state of most of the houses and the clothes people wear lead one to guess that the average income often does not exceed 70, sometimes 120 and seldomly 150 Euros. And that presumably only for those who have managed to secure work at the (as yet?) meagre Maquiladora (3): At the Skoda/VW factory directly behind the border at Chop or at the Japanese-US car supplier Yazaki, a few kilometres further towards Ushgorod. These workbench extensions are branches of the car industry that has extended to Eastern Europe (4) over the last years.

Here in Transcarpatia, not far behind the EU border, a few global players hope for a long-term low wage paradise, where without a doubt the following saying applies: "It's terrible to be exploited by a transnational corporation, but it's (often) worse not to be".


This is because people in this region have few alternatives: back when the Soviet Union still existed there was already little industry, the agricultural possibilities are limited by the Carpathians and tourism is as yet not well developed. Many have no other choice but to eke out a living with small trading opportunities or petrol smuggling (5). Or, they can emigrate: to the Czech Republic or to Russia, to Portugal or the USA (6), be it as seasonal labourers, as au-pairs for a few months, as construction workers or as domestic helpers for a few years. And many don't come back at all, at best for a visit on important family holidays.

Over 40% of the working population of Transcarpatia is employed on a temporary basis or works abroad permanently. In earlier years it was particularly men who left. Today equal numbers of women make this move. Although visas to the West are becoming more and more expensive, they can (still) be organised, thus illegal border crossings for Ukrainians are an exception. But tourist visas are only valid for three months and holders don't qualify for work. Jobs and the ability to earn money are therefore usually "illegal" from the start and additionally, many people become "overstayers" (7). Nevertheless, through different legalisation campaigns in southern Europe in the last few years (8) many Ukrainians were able to regularise their status. However, this status was always tied to certain conditions, and in the first instance to their workplaces. The reason for this is that everywhere in Europe compliant workers are needed for the different low wage sectors (9). Therefore it's even more surprising that migrant workers, despite such exploitative conditions, are able to send immense amounts of money to their families in the Ukraine and specifically, in Transcarpatia (10). Like many countries at the lower end of the global wage scale, these transfers, these remittances, have become a central source of income. This is not only apparent in the increasing number of Western Union offices (11) there, but also in

how the savings of migrant labour are creating new opportunities: a new shop, the ability to buy a taxi, house renovations or the acquisition of expensive consumer goods such as cars, or the otherwise hardly affordable education of one's children.

The close proximity to the EU border creates another source of income for many people in this region, one of the poorest of the Ukraine. Illegal border crossing is in high demand, the supposedly mafia-like structures of this business provide jobs in the temporary accommodation and transportation of transit migrants who come primarily from countries bordering the region, such as Moldavia, South East Asia or Africa. It's an open secret that the military, responsible for controlling the borders, is centrally involved in this business. It's of particular interest to the EU that Ukrainian border control forces intercept many of the illegal border crossers - as an eastern buffer state comparable with Morocco at the southern border of the EU. With a lot of money, political pressure and the active complicity of international organisations (12) for a number of years now everything is being done to turn the Ukrainian authorities into efficient assistants to the EU migration regime. This goal meets (and at the same time contradicts) a self-interest of the Ukrainian border army. Nobody should get through who hasn't paid extra. It really does seem to be the case that nobody who turns up without a bribe is able to get through. Quite the opposite: Whoever has enough money and can find "travel agencies" with good contacts, won't fail at the Ukrainian border. In 2003 there was an exemplary scandal when it was made public that a border army prisoner transport vehicle was used to carry people towards the Slovakian green border. The group of travellers had obviously paid well:

Those who are left behind are those without the necessary resources. And these are increasingly refugees who cannot keep up with this "survival of the fittest". In the summer of 2004 we met a Palestinian family in Ushgorod who had experienced all of these tortures. First they had been abandoned in a forest by their facilitators and lost all their money. They were then caught by border police and detained for five months. The women were



Transcarpatia
Ukraine

brought to the detention centre in Mukachevo, the men to the now infamous deportation prison Pavshino. A militarised starvation camp in which 250 men were locked up. Most of them from South East Asia, but some also from Africa. Many times a day they were called to be counted, were given appalling food, had no electricity, there were mass dormitories and they were constantly at the mercy of the soldiers. Nothing much has changed in Pavshino since then (13).

The prison in Pavshino is in the middle of the forest. Only once during the five months of their detention, the Palestinian men reported, three Chinese were able to escape. They had dug a tunnel from the kitchen. Other than this, there had been no way out, unless one's asylum application was perhaps not just received but also dealt with and taken seriously. At that time, in 2004, this was only possible if the UNHCR intervened. Today at least lawyers visit the camp a few times a week. They support the detainees with their applications and pass them on to the relevant authorities.

Pavshino is the reception and deportation camp for the large part of the migrants and refugees who are caught at the border. This may be on the Ukrainian side or in Slovakia, if they managed to reach it. Officially there is a 15 km border area. Whoever is arrested there can, due to the agreements regarding the returning of refugees, be forcefully returned. And the Slovakian border control does not hold back. They've returned people who they found dur-

ing controls or raids much further outside of this area. Who can check?

Those who are arrested or returned are at first brought to the border town of Chop where nowadays there is a newly renovated prison directly at the border, financed with EU money. An increasing number of illegal border crossers are from Moldova or Chechnya and because they, due to the fact that They're citizens of former Soviet republics, are able to travel to the Ukraine without a visa, They're released again after ten days with nothing more than a fine. They have to return to their country of origin of their own accord within fifteen days. If they try to enter again however, They're then detained for longer. Nonetheless, Chechnyan refugees have apparently been deported by train to



Refugee Camp for Women 'Mukachevo'

Russia and abandoned there (14). Despite this, many of them manage to cross the EU border the second or third time they try. The risk is taken in order to work in the West as a migrant worker and to earn the kind of money in months that it would take one year to earn at home.

Whoever comes from other coun-

tries of the Global South and fails at this last border to the EU is also brought to Chop for a short period. After a few days the final stop is Pavshino. From China, India or Vietnam, from Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Palestine, Iraq or Somalia: about 400 people are interned here at present by order of the EU. The detention sentence is six months, standards like in Germany. And whoever the Ukrainian authorities are able to obtain travel documents for from the relevant embassies, is then deported. The ones who remain are "spat out" again, just like the Palestinian family who again became dependent on money from friends and family to try, this time successfully, to gain access to the West European destination country.

About 5000 persons were arrested at this Ukrainian border between 2005 and 2006, according to official figures. Yet it's estimated that this is a mere tenth of those who do or want to get through. So, about 50 000 of the 500 000 who overcome the EU borders every year, according to the vague estimation made by Europol a few years back?

Thus one can understand why - from the viewpoint of Frontex officer - Transcarpatia is seen as a real problem zone.

And hopefully this will remain so for many years to come.

By Hagen -
activist of „Kein Mensch ist
illegal“ (No one is illegal) group
from Hanau/Germany

Notes:

1) In this text, the information and opinions provided stem from two visits to Ushgorod in the summer of 2004 and the end of 2006, collated from conversations and interviews.

2) Frontex is the name of the European border agency established in 2005 with it's headquarters in Warsaw. Primarily, it is responsible for the control of the external borders of the EU. Frontex ships now patrol the coast of West Africa in order to intercept Boat people.

3) Maquiladoras are the world market factories in Mexico directly on the border to the US where the wages are considerably lower than on the other side of the border.

4) The boom of the car industry in Eastern Europe seems unstoppable, for example Slovakia is already being called the new Detroit. There, just like in the Czech republic, many Ukrainians work in the factories (see also texts in the magazine Wildcat Nos. 76 and 78).

5) This is proven by the long queues of cars at the border crossing to Hungary where petrol is much more expensive.

6) At the end of 2006 the following order of emigration countries was determined: Russia, Portugal, USA, Italy, Czech Republic ...

7) "Overstayer" is the name given to people who enter a country legally but then overstay the term of their visa or don't leave at all, thus becoming "illegal".

8) In Spain and Italy there have been regularisation programmes in the last years, as well as in Portugal in 2001/2002, where about 60 000 Ukrainians (!) were legalised. It's not by accident that since then a strong migration chain to Portugal has developed.

9) Especially in location bound sectors (construction, agriculture, household and care...) cheap labour is sought in the EU countries, whereby illegalised migrants without rights are targeted.

10) Estimated figures: It has been calculated that 300 dollars per head are sent back to Transcarpatia every month. This is be more than double the monthly income in this region!

11) Western Union is the largest and most well-known bank which charges high fees for money transfers. All kinds of Western and Eastern banks do business this way and no small town is now without a branch.

12) An example is in particular the IOM which, since the 1990s, has been pushing a border and detention regime in the Ukraine in the interests of the EU (see also www.noborder.org).

13) See also the excellent report by Stefan Duennwald of the Bavarian Refugee Council on the Asylum system and the Pavshino camp in the new edition of the magazine Hinterland (an english translation is available on the noborder website).

14) see 13 above.

Don't Vote - Organize!



"Peoples Dreams Don't Fit into Ballot-Boxes"

Anti-Election Activities Around Eastern Europe

In October 2007 we are facing elections in three countries one after another: in Ukraine, Poland and Bulgaria. Everywhere, anarchists are or were on the streets with more or less intensive anti-election campaigns containing various forms of action and specific publications. While polish anarchists, among other statements, repeated that *"Peoples dreams don't fit into ballot-boxes"*, analyzed that *"we are a society of politically homeless - whoever is in power we remain on the loser-side"* and concluded that *"society awaits a radical turn, in many issues a turn of 180°, and such a turn cannot be made by political elites but only by social movements"*, Ukrainian anarchists informing about the growing *"disillusionment in authority"*, and Bulgarian ones are busy with spreading the ideas of *"direct democracy and local assemblies"*. Altogether we present you here with 7 different statements of different groups and activists from these regions (typically most of them from Poland...). One can say that they all speak about and want the same... That may be true, however, we believe that different ways of analysing, making arguments and propagating the same ideas are still worth of comparing or at least of presentation. Keep in mind that most of these texts are addressed to society in general and not written specifically for the journal. **ABB**

We are a Society of Politically Homeless - Whoever is in Power, We Remain on the Losers Side

Declaration of Initiative "Condemned to Ireland" Towards Actual Socio-Political Situation and Upcoming Parliamentary Elections in Poland

Some millions of Poles have left the country recently, and we do not have any more strength to even repeat for what reasons. Another several millions haven't done it for many different reasons, but it is clear that during the last 18 years nothing has happened in this country what they could consider as "to their advantage". At least nothing from what was introduced by the state authorities. All of us, the few millions abroad as well as the many millions which remained, we are all asked again these days to elect our new political elites. Because of that, however, just in the first line, in the name of those who signed this declaration, but with the strong conviction that many of you feel the same, we are sharing here what we think about it.

The only exit is boycott of the elections

In reaction to the proceedings of the polish political elites, already a long time ago, the popular boycott of elections should of been declared and one would not even need to search for arguments to explain the reasons why. The arguments are lying on the hand and are provided consequently day by day by politicians themselves. Yet, disappointment and disapproval

towards polish political class, is not the same as understanding why and in which way, we - the common people - are the victims of politics organised inside the state institutions: in parliament, government, ministries, presidential palace... It is important to understand the reasons why it is happening, the way that whoever is in power, we remain on the loser-side? At the same time, to find answers on the worrying question: Is there any exit from this vicious cycle maintaining us, working people, on the bottom of the social ladder?

Utopia of "solidarity state" - key political slogan of "PiS" (*"Law and Justice"* government party) - as it was to expect, just supported a process of constant worsening of life quality of the poorest and the process of the increase gap between majority of society and the minority of the winners. So it seems to be the right time to quit with the dreams of "solidarity state" and to start simply creating the solidarity society with omission of elements of power...

But one after another...

Social unrest is necessary to run politics

Despite the fact that so many people left Poland, masses of us are still liv-

ing there on the edge of poverty and in fear of tomorrow. Of course it leads to our discontent. One would assume that social unrest is dangerous for the political class and has to act to our advantage. Unfortunately, this is not necessary true. It appears that our discontent, at least in the form in which we have expressed it till now, is a fodder for the political elites which they permanently need for their fight for political influence, their fight for power. In the 90's there were political liberals, social-democrats and moderate right tendencies which made use of it the most. In the last years it was mainly conservatives and the radical right which have seized and pretty smartly transformed for their use our anger. And pretty soon this trick may be effectively used by our dear turbo-capitalists from "PO" (*"Citizens Platform"* - party of neo-liberals). "PO", which is rightly criticising a state, gloating in the society of today's Poland, is simultaneously trying to sell us the self-regulation of the market as a *medicine* for our problems. Problems caused exactly by the, glorified by them and by all other governments in the last 18 years parties, capitalism. Maybe it is worth to stress it here once again: nowhere on the world does the free market and capi-

talism lead to equalisation of chances, nowhere has it led to the establishing of general respect and dignity for all. Why exactly in Poland should this miracle happen? Let's look around, let's look on ourselves, what effects has this *medicine* brought during the past 18 years, and we will know: not with *medicine* but with a *poison* are we feed.

Seizing and controlling of our social emotions

But let us not simplify so easily. The problem consists not in the treachery of *Solidarnosc*, nor in perversity of *social-democracy*, not even in the hypocrisy of liberals the from *PO*, or in the eagerness of power and the muzzling policy of *Kaczynskis' & the PiS*. These are only elements of the entire conception of the power in which we are involved. The real problem is exactly this conception itself. Conception of political powers which produces a scheme being repeated for years and which is functioning in spite of the critical attitude towards the authorities, supposedly typical for polish society. The scheme consists of the way that this political party which achieves seizing and channelling our unrest, this party which adjusts its program to our emotions the best, this one will win the elections. In this way our emotions are being taken under control; our unrest can function only within the imposed framework. Political, supposedly pro-social parties, impose on us a discipline towards the sphere of their politics. As a result of it we are becoming passive for another period of time. Then, in one moment, we will rise again in our unrest, just in order to allow another party to put themselves expertly "in our defence", to get our votes in the next elections, to get into power and to impose on us again the framework of our unrest. And so it happens again and again since years.

It becomes obvious that politics in today's form consists exactly on the competing of the different leaders in power parties, made through the effective seizing of our emotions. Because of that, this procedure becomes more and more subtle and difficult to see through. So it should not be a wonder that we are even not considering that it is permanently happening.

There seem to be many methods of manipulation and channelling of our emotions by political parties. Some from this collection are: making use of public opinion surveys; deformation of social values; linking the issue of social safety; and manipulations with the very term of democracy.

Double character of public opinion surveys

What is an actual purpose of constantly conducted public opinion surveys? Is it an estimating of social mood? Yes. But who is actually getting the advantage from all this information? Any of us? No. For us this is information which we can exchange during lunch, and that's it. While for the *world of politics* it is a fodder for its proceedings. Information coming out from surveys - who is an object of temporal social indignation, on what events does society react with a change of political sympathies, etc - on the basis of such daily gathered information, are being modified, and even created, programs of all political parties. In order to meet our needs half way? No. In order to use our emotions for their own political goals.

BOJKOT WYBORÓW



Social values as auction commodity on the market of power

One of the most significant problems of an honest inhabitant of this country is the fact that he/she is naked. Robbed not only of the means of living, from existence in dignity and from cheerful future, but as well from the highest social values. And who was the robber...? Our lovely political class. If we consider as our highest social values common justice, personal freedom, mutual solidarity, feeling of safety... then all these terms have already been seized, discredited, if not outraged by politicians and their political parties. Let's take a look on the names of the biggest polish parties after the change of the system: "Electoral Action *Solidarity*" (AWS), "Union of *Freedom*" (UW), "Law and *Justice*" (PiS), "*Self-defence*" (Samobrona), "*solidarity state*" of *Kaczynskis'*... etc. Such close and important values for us got brutally transformed into empty slogans of political parties and became auction commodities on the market of power.

And how can an honest person of honest (in the sense of "not heading for power") social initiative/organisation relate itself to the mentioned values without a feeling of populism, demagoguery or helplessness. Why does the term "*solidarity*" today stunk in the throat of most of polish workers? Why does the honest polish person not know how to express himself when he/she means just regular *justice*? Why are the young people not today speaking with excitement any more about *freedom*?

If state communism has managed to deform in about half century such social values and terms like *equality*, *collective property* or *international responsibility*, then the common proceeding of polish political class in years 1989-2007 has managed something much more brutal: in less than quarter of a century they have robbed us of our values, on the basis of which we could mark a sense of the new social order. And so, we are staying naked.

Politicians taking care of social safety

One of the most effective political arguments of recent years in Poland appears to be talking about the solicitude of social safety. It was enough to study public opinion surveys a few years ago and the use of this argument was lying at hand for the near future. So the preying on the popular instinct for the needs for safety has begun. But who is actually taking this feeling away? "The people which commit crimes, the criminals!" is the common answer of all politicians, from the far right till the far left. Yet, at the foundation of social safety lays the issue of the source of anti-social behaviours, so called offences. Meanwhile all political parties tolerate and deepen economic discrimination, generating through this a mass of poor and desperate people, which in turn, through desperation, are losing the feeling of social ties. It comes to an actual break of these ties, egoistic behaviours, and in extreme cases to social pathologies (alcoholism, violence...) and to the escape into far right attitudes, whose extreme expressions are racism and anti-semitism.

On the other side are those of the political-economic elites becoming completely pervaded by the desire for power. Corruption seems to be a common symptom for both social classes, however while on the bottom, corruption may help to survive, on the top it is an element of proceeding in influence so those on the top of the social scale are profiting the most from cor-

ruption. In such a situation there cannot be any discussion about social safety, irrelevant on how much the state security services will extend their capacities, how many anti-corruption affairs will be discovered, how many new prisons will be built and how many young people will be put into uniforms and sent out on the streets of towns and villages in the entire country.

In reality, we are already afraid not only of "informal criminals" (mostly young people which already at the very beginning of their lives had no possibility to experience the feeling of community, solidarity and social justice) but also of the omnipresent control organised by the state and the sanctions imposed on every corner (supposedly to eliminate the crimes). These are just other elements of preying on our emotions and politicians talk about solving the problem of social safety in order to get our support for their politics, while they are sanctioning us without even touching the very crux of the problem. The truth is as follows: our daily feelings of insecurity, anxiety and feeling of danger have become an integral part of the world of politics – a commodity on the market of the entire political class.

Democracy – on the tongue of everyone. What do WE have from it – we see ourselves

Democracy is today on the tongue of everyone. This is a political system announced as the only one which can guarantee justice. If yes, then where the fuck is this justice? Our politicians will answer: it is still not possible to materialise because of continues distortions. Distortions? From where do we know it ... ? (it was a common way of justifying the disaster of state communism in Eastern Europe 50 years long). But we do not have to deal with any distortions, being responsible for the lack of social justice, in Poland or anywhere else. It is maybe difficult to believe, in the times when democracy is advertised to the level of the highest dogma and fetish at the same time, but it is democracy itself which is a guarantee of social injustice. Especially in such a country as Poland where from its birth it was considered

as a political, and not in any case, economic process.

We are being told that democracy is guarantying freedoms. What freedoms? Of speech, of media, and universal equality before the law. So there is omnipresent aiming at the imagined political parities (e.g. we can all participate in elections...), while the economic discrimination does not interest anybody from our, ohh-how-ripe-for-democracy, democrats. In reality, these holy democratic freedoms are evidently relative because they are tolerated only as long as they don't impede over the interests of the class possessing the political and de facto, economic power. These people possess automatic control over economic matters, media and education, and so, control over the most significant spheres of social life. The voices and demands raised from below are marginally being threatened.

Our fate, quality of life, the needs of the common people, are not relevant for the functioning of democracy as a political system. Important is that we continue to give our support (legitimacy) to those who actually create this democracy – to "our" political elites. So finally democracy remains a collaboration relation binding us, people discontent with social status-quo, around capitalistic property relations. The embodiment of this collaboration is the parliamentary system and government providing us with imagined political freedoms and democratic social guaranties. What do WE really have from it – we can see for ourselves. About democracy in economic sense – nothing to hear.

Society of politically homeless

A very visible social reaction on the above mentioned processes became the decrease of electoral participation through its refusal. This reaction is the most logical one, as all of us, some of us sooner – some of us later, are coming to the same conclusion: from the political point of view we are all homeless! Observing the real world around us, and not from the perspective of electoral promises, electoral programs and declarations, following governments and debates in parliament, we have to admit that we are evidently ignored by the entire political class. Actually we could make ourselves

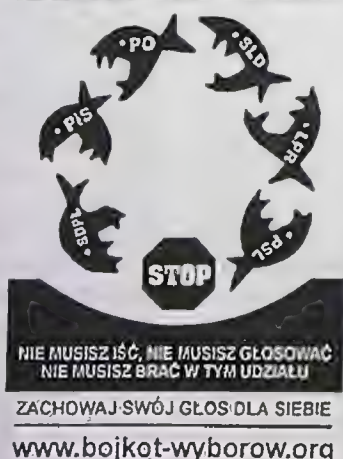
guilty for such political homelessness as we were too long deluded that it can be different, that political parties may become a political shelter for us. The experience of many various systems build up mainly on political representation, on parliamentarism and democracy proclaimed from above, teaches that sooner or later we will always find ourselves cheated, embittered, simply ... "condemned to Ireland".

To break the ties with politicians or to remain in the loyal-losers position for ever?

Such feeling of being lowered awakes a sensation of fear or even anger. And that's right: if we are needed for the political class only as an electorate, by such, calling the things with their name – they do not give a shit about peoples real needs, there is no reason to not treat them in the same way! To finally decide for a conscious breaking of ties between the world of the common people (these working, jobbing, busy with little trade, unemployed, going to school and studying ...) with the world of politicians and their financial sponsors, could result in the situation in which they would find themselves political homelessness – without social support they can govern only over themselves. However such conscious break of diagonal ties, ties which exists anyway only in electoral slogans of parties, must be consequent, it means it has to be replaced with a new spirit of horizontal social structures and ties. At least with something similar to what was already almost 30 years ago so strongly present in peoples demands – Autonomous Republic (according to the documents from the first gathering of "Solidarnosc" in 1980).

Otherwise, as an effect of our own incompetence, many of us will find ourselves ready to look for any help wherever and in this way we will become a victim of another political game: old/new gang of politicians will smile at us from the TV-screen, will lend a helping hand to us from the election-billboard, will influence the mind of some people from our direct social environment and soon we will all be cheated again. And again we will put ourselves on the losers-side; deluded by rightwing parties with such substitutes of satisfaction like lustration, nationalism and religion; hallucinated by leftwing parties and liberals with the utopia of social justice built up on the free market- and parliamentarian- fetish. Are we really

WYBORY?



still in a state of believing that further lustration, pomp of national symbols, permanent praying, speculation on Stock-exchange or debates on the use to us of the people in parliament, that these things will make us again healthy and happy? Or maybe it is us that need to undertake get active?

Social autonomy out of the burden of authorities

Maybe it would be worth to turn back to the idea of social autonomy as quick as possible? To organising society, social structures, without an army of state parasites – politicians and needless bureaucrats, and with-

ing honest working people. Society release from the state-giant, liberated from the burden of authority and political pollution. Society built up from below on the fundamentals of the structures acting in open public space and not behind the closed cabinet-doors of companies and plant directors, or doors of bosses of political parties and connected with the world of power trade unions. Social structures organised in terms of participative democracy and communicating between each other in a horizontal and direct way.

Lets replace the elections with stimulating a solidarity autonomous society

In this way we are coming to the key question of this declaration, namely to finding an answer to the question worrying us: is there any exit out of the vicious cycle maintaining us, working people, on the bottom of the social ladder? In the context of the above examination there appears a, one could say banal but at the same time, realistic idea. Idea realistic in terms of its realisation, by all of us desiring to tear ourselves out from the chain of authority and to find a new way for polish society.

Instead of going to the electoral ballots let us declare this day a day of setting up autonomous social struc-

tures: neighbourhood committees, workers autonomous structures, solidarity groups, etc. There where they already exist, and there are quite a few such structures in the country, they could at the day of elections activate themselves in the sense of undertaking a strike or street action. And there, where the setting up of such structures is still not possible, lets meet in the locals or squares of our neighbourhoods and work-places and lets talk openly about the possibilities and perspectives of stimulating an autonomous solidarity society in this country.

Let us wreck our discontent not through another dull voting, but through collective organising, proceeding from the rank and file. And let us not forget: our anger has to become our weapon again and be aimed against the authorities, and not as it is today – a weapon in the hands of the authorities... and damnation for us.

*Initiative "Condemned to Ireland" **

* As a result of massive unemployment and lack of perspectives in years 2004-2007 between 1,5 and 2,5 million people decided to leave Poland. Most of them headed to Great Britain, majority directly to Ireland.

SEJM, SENAT



**BURDEL?
MELINA?
CYRK?
PRZEDSZKOLE?**

out the capitalistic parasites – the plague of small and big exploiters rob-

"Today, the only alternative is an open protest. Calling to vote 'against Kaczynskis' is dangerous exactly because it is giving illusion that this way, through parliamentary elections and through legal means, one can oppose deepening authoritarianism. While Kaczynskis', is just an effect and not the source of the problem"

10 Arguments for an Election-Boycott

Each time when the elections appear in the middle of attention, the issue of their boycott appears too. This is normal thing as since the very moment of appearance of institution of popular elections part of the society is not taking part in it. And these for various reasons: personal-, philosophy of life-, political ones, etc. The massive participation in elections, for example over the 80%, is considered with reasonable suspiciousness and is taking place mostly in the authoritarian systems. It testifies mostly forgery of election results. So the boycott, refusal of voting, is in fact, and against widely spread opinion, a matter of course. At least at the same level as the act of participation is. Legislative forcing to vote (e.g. in Belgium) is a violence. The same considered the aggressive agitation for

participation in elections, especially the one conducted by state institutions and paid from the taxes, paid as well by the people which very consciously do not want to take part in elections. So this is the first argument.

Second one

From the perspective of anarchist ideas, but I believe that as well from those deeply democratic ones, refusal, especially nowadays, is an act more obvious than the participation itself. I am coming from the assumption which I guess is common for the most part of the society: the most important basis of the democracy is direct participation in taking the political decisions. By the way, polish Constitution speaks quite clearly that „the society hold the power through

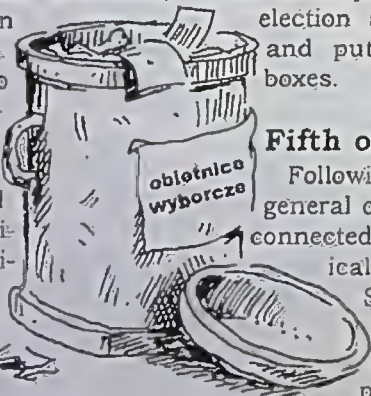
its representatives or directly". Representation should be rather an exception as the norm. And if it comes to the delegation of competences, than the delegate should be tied by instructions of the electors, should be easy to dismiss, etc. While in the system we live in we witness total shake of balance between a delegation and direct participation in taking the political decisions. The deputies/councillors are not tied by instructions, they are even elected in a way which causes that they are not associate with particular group of electors (e.g. the conception of election district with only one-mandate is being introduced effectively). Additionally, different sort of pathologies are present, which make the representative democracy the institution of complete alienation of power.

financing the political parties from the state budget eliminates effectively the possibility of constitute at least a local representative to the parliament. Permanent manipulation in electoral law regulations should lead to maintenance of domination of the hitherto existing structures of power. To take a part in the elections means in reality to give up the right to take part in political live and delegating this competence to the person with which we are rather not identifying ourselves. Participation in the elections is an acceptance of process of deepening alienation of power, instead refusing the system as the whole and demanding real participation in processes of taking decision.

Third one

So in my opinion, saying that "call for boycott serves to process of deepening of social apathy" is an abuse. Participation in elections supports representative democracy, which de facto have lead to the oligarchic way of governance. For example the political opposition (supposedly the main element in system of parliamentary democracy) became a fiction, what you can see so well on example of PO and PiS (two leading parties in today's Poland - ABB). The differences between them have rather a medial character and are prepared just for a need of present politics. On the TV-screens the opponents fights each other while behind the cameras they shake the hands saying: "Hey Ritchie, you have been really good today, ohh, by the way - what a nice tie", "Ehh, come on, you were not worse than me Eddie. Let's go drink something"... So we are facing an impossibility of breaking these oligarchic rules of the colleges and this is a true reason of the social apathy, and the logical exit from this state of apathy is refusal of participation in principally undemocratic system of rules. The accusation saying that "electoral absence is a result of apathy" is wrong as well for that reason that we have here to do with a certain process. These people, who still participated in the last elections,

decide to stay home in the following ones. Something has had to influence such a decision and most likely this was disappointment of the political system. So this decision is a political decision of not less meaning as the one of keeping strictly to the



believe that "it is my duty to vote".

Fourth one

Contemporary system of governance has excluded entire spheres of the social life from the democratic principles. The working place is a typical example where democratic system does not work, even if for big number of workers it is their only environment in which they are acting as a public person. It is exactly opposite as it is commonly taken for grounded today. Behind the gates of the plant we are very often becoming very private persons - discussion, exchange of opinions and establishing of associations (of various kinds - if trade unions or sport groups) is taking place in the workplace and this despite the attempt of elimination of everything what is "political" from the plants, through forcing system of labour which alienate workers, in terms of: "work and not discuss!". Most schemes of setting the social relations, of exchange of opinions, solving the conflicts... which are accessible to people, are taking its source from their work place and have usually authoritarian character. The same is valid for family and parish - two others important sphere of social live in Poland, which as well do not work on democratic principles. So there exists fundamental contradiction between democracy in its declarative sense, and the principles on which are shaped social relations in the daily practice. Contradiction which leads to refusal of voting and which demands democratic principles in the real spheres of live, and not in the spheres abstract for most people - like watching the election spots of political parties and putting the ballots to the boxes.

Fifth one

Following arguments are of less general character, they are rather connected with contemporary political situation in Poland. Someone could say that none the less the previous arguments, participation in election is still

better than refusal in the moment when one can vote for party (and not concrete person) which, at least theoretically, could represents his/her interests or opinions. This argument is based on believe, that the main principle of democracy is a participation in the governance and not its refusal. At this place I will not be very original in repeating the thesis that people are not voting mainly because they do not see anybody who would seem to represent their interests. One can hardly criticize them for it or accuse for being apathetic. The hired workers are

in the first line those ones which do not have such a representation, than generally the poorer people and those being excluded, but as well the small farmers. The main parties taking part in the political game represent the very narrow spectrum of people while trying to convince electorate that they are appearing in the name of common interests, as well, or even in the first line, of those on the very bottom. To give a concrete example lets identify whose interests is representing such a SAMOBRONA party (Self-defence - one of parties from the last government coalition, it supposed to be a party of polish farmers - ABB), which is presented by its opponents, but as well by themselves, as a populist party. Is this party representing the interests of the entire population of polish farmers? Is it represents these owning little fields, ex-workers of PGR (state agricultural-unites during the time of state-socialism), or farm-hand-workers? No, whatever its leader Andrzej Lepper is saying, it represents mainly interests of big farmers. This group got consolidated in the past around the problem of massive debts which have been causing a resistance against monetarist state politics and the "reforms of Balcerowicz". Even if this resistance was united around Samoobrona party, as we can see from time-perspective, interests of big part of countryside people are not homogenous. The big farmers are profiting a lot from the EU subventions while the situation of the rest of the farmers and their families, didn't changed at all. For them the question

This Election, vote



NOBODY

- NOBODY keeps election promises
- NOBODY has all the answers
- NOBODY will represent you

"A vote for Nobody is a vote for Everybody!"

of production, of agricultural products, remains the main questions, as the only fact of owning a piece of land is not making them profiteers of the new formed social system in polish country side. So the average farmer by voting for Lepper and his "Samobrona" party acts actually against his own interests. And he has no alternative.

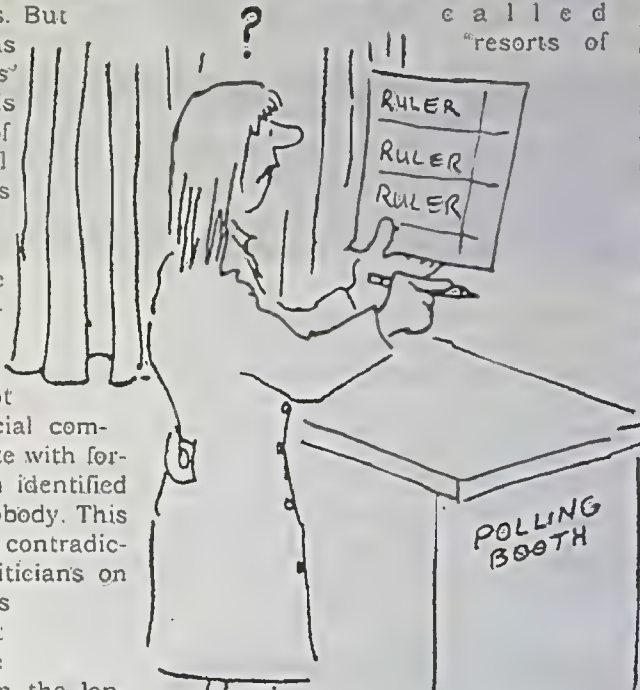
Sixth one

If one will treat representative democracy only as a game of various interests and not as a procedure of common taking of decisions, it would be a good enough reason to reject it and to boycott of elections. But we have to say that even as a game of the interests' today democratic system is not giving us possibilities of their, these interests, real identification. In the times of domination of electronically media, indoctrination replaced the debate and client-ism - the citizens' rights. Already on the level of language, political parties are not appealing to concrete social communities but rather operate with formulations with which can identified himself everybody ... or nobody. This is often a language full of contradictions what condemns politicians on accusation of lie. Politicians often mean that it was not in their intention but the lie in this case consist in the language which is being choose - a measure of transmission became a transmission by itself. The popular conviction that all politicians are lying is actually not so far from the reality, while it is not a result (at least not in all cases), of characters of personality, but is consequence of struggle for power logic. While rejection of participation in elections very often leads to perceive falsehood of promises about realising anybody's hopes, it leads to reflection that "for one particular voice one can get just the same much as one can get for one zloty in supermarket". The reflection appears: "if we all together...", which discovers complete senselessness of representative democracy in face of atomised society facing the obstacles in setting of collective demands.

Seventh one

In context of present situation in Poland one of the arguments being used against the boycott of the elections is that "under the governance of PiS we can face the development of fascistic tendencies" (so we should

vote against this party - ABB). It is true that social-national-catholic program of PiS is dangerously reminding some moments in the modern history. While one need to be very careful by constructing historical analogies the actual similarities are hard to be overseen, especially when the representatives of the authorities do not avoid links to historical authoritarian models by themselves. Program of PiS is full of phrases telling about necessity of "empowerment of the state", but as well about "cleaning of the state". Strong state, commander- and mentorial- political style as well as stressing the meaning of so called "resorts of



forces" are typical symptoms of authoritarian tendency. However, as Hegel wrote one day - this is a liberalism which inevitably leads to authoritarianism. Politics of the Kaczynskis' is based on the effects of transformation which ideological ground was set by polish conservative neo-liberalism. It means that one can not truly oppose fascistic tendencies while taking part in the elections, because none of the political parties (PO?, LiD?, PSL?) guarantees a change which would solve the problem of danger of authoritarian power. Today, the only alternative is an open protest. Calling to vote "against Kaczynskis" is danger exactly because it is giving illusion that this way, through parliamentary elections and through legal means, one can oppose deepening authoritarianism. While Kaczynskis', are just an effect and not source of the problem. In best case one can count on little aesthetic corrector, and not on the liquidation of the sources.

Eighth one

Calling for participation in elections means as well helping the neo-liberals to reach a majority as they will most probably reach more than 50% places in parliament (PO + LiD) or they will set a majority (together with Party of Kaczynskis' - PiS) being than able to change any law, even the constitution. This would be the parliamentary majority which we, as workers, should be aware the most, as we can be sure that such political situation in country would be quickly used by business. It would be as well a dream situation for Catholic Church which has influence on both parties, PO as well as on LiD. The opponents of boycotting the elections are saying that such a scenario can not be avoid anyway, independently from the boycott campaign... as well as independently from the participation! So if there is anyway no parliamentary force existing ready to stop the neo-liberals on their way to power, than still more logical solution, especially in context of above presented arguments, is to stay at home. Even more logical seems to be to get out on the streets.

Ninth one

Another very often used "pro-participation" argument is based on naive believes that existing politicians and parties are worth of trust. Trust in politicians can come only out of possibility of social control their behaviours, and not out of trust in their personal characters, even if of course these characters can favour the control itself. It is probably a banal to say that honest representation can be only conduct by person directly connected with the community she/he represents, otherwise an alienated socially politician relates his activities towards his parliamentary colleagues from his party, and not towards his electorate. And how already Bakunin have said, when they become "representatives of the society" they represent not the society anymore but only themselves and "their own pretensions to lead it". This naive believe considered many groups of activists which in daily live present themselves as anti-system parties, well... even as revolutionary ones, but when the elections are coming they suddenly accept the obtruded game conditions which price is the self-humiliation, and what even worse - humiliation of whole radical movement. They present themselves as the "only just ones" which sooner or later have to be elected. Yeah! Just some more little

modifications and they will be ready to participate in official, big politics. Already know they do not hide that their goal is to „through into the parliament” at least one deputy or to catch some of the state subventions. As we can see: very revolutionary goals! In most cases they will end with results under 1% what in the whole election carousel has actually no meaning. Are they at least able to explain what electorate they represent? Can anybody give at least one reason why should we vote for them, especially in context of massive arguments speaking for boycott? Is their good mood this reason?

Tenth one

Last argument but not necessarily less important – the moral one. Let us for a while think about why the entire state propaganda is used in order that we participate in the elections. „Not important for who but go and vote!”, it is clear that most of the votes will finally go to the proper ones. Election propaganda more intensive the more massive is social refusal and contempt towards entire contemporary system of power: injustice, undemocratic and oligarchic. Election propaganda more noisy the less people feel any links with this system. Increasing election absence, increasing election refusal, mean

(without going more deeply into the individual motivations) the refusal of legitimisation of system. If the system got deviated, if it became obvious that it is non-reformable, our obligation is to refuse it entirely: boycott. Participation in the elections, especially if one can not see there any sense, stays for admitting that something link us with this system. This is moral choice, which sense should not be disregarded.

Jaroslav Urbanski
September 2007
Anarchist Federation/
Workers Initiative

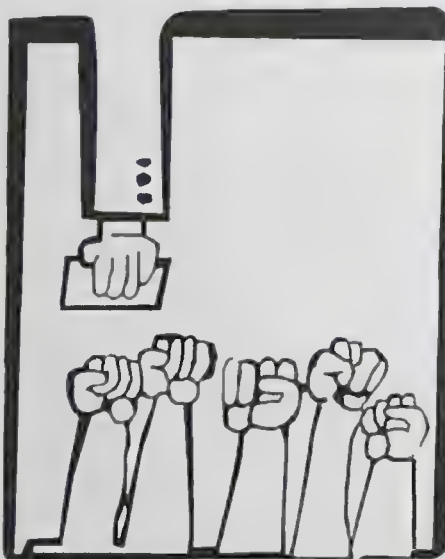
Elections in Ukraine: Disillusionment in Authority

„Pre-election social poll showed that if a line „Against all” is changed into „You can all fuck off”, 99 % of the population will vote for it”

Around 1999-2000, a young Ukrainian writer, Pavlo Solodko, who has been affiliated with the student anarchist organization „Directe Action” for some time, had written the book „The fourth revolution”. Though the author characterises the style of his book as a „cap-realist fantasy”, it appeared to be close to reality. According to the plot of the book, the leader of the nation who comes to power on the wave of the peoples’ rage and democratic protest rather quickly turns into a dictator, even worse then the previously overthrown one. Paradoxically, young liberal Viktor Yushchenko, who came on the wave of protest against Leonid Kuchma, is currently doing everything to get back the power of his predecessor. Basically, he wants to return the system he was so severely criticizing to move into the Pechersk hills.

Elections 2007 can’t be analyzed without the context of the fight for power among oligarch groups in Ukraine. This struggle has already lasted for a couple of years and there was a certain period when it was favourable for society, since it allowed multiple opinions, critique of the authorities and existence of more or less stable protection by bureaucracy and law enforcement authorities. Within the framework of this struggle, we should understand the interest of certain political forces to the civil protest movements „Ukraine without Kuchma”, the appearance of the tent city at Maidan Nezalezhnosti in Kyiv etc. Thus, after the Orange Revolution, authorities and major political forces started to treat civil

protest actions as a tool to influence their political rivals and public opinion; to legitimize their demands and interests. Furthermore, a majority of these initiatives were artificial and activists received funding for participation. Thus, Ukraine’s got the whole industry of „maidan-arbeiter” which allows all political forces to hold their public actions. A system of recruitment of students and other non-qual-



ified workers has been worked out, hourly and daily salaries have been set up. It is in fact considered by the public as a regular way to earn money. Consequently, there is a respective attitude towards mass actions: it is of common knowledge that they are being done for money not for certain beliefs or attempt to voice a protest.

Interim parliamentary elections in

Ukraine were preceded by a total social disappointment in the „orange” political bloc. Promises given out in winter 2004 to thousands of people on the main square of Ukraine’s capital appeared to be pure populism. In couple of months, the camp of winners was characterized by internal quarrels, embittered by the division of obtained power. Emphasis on public activities, but not real policymaking, led to disappointment of the majority of the orange supporters. The most fanatical supporters found themselves in despair and frustration. Behavior of the new authority showed that it didn’t differ much from the previous one and the merit of the newly elected politicians is rather lessons from the mistakes of the earlier regime (for example so called securing „freedom of speech” is a nonsense and no more then fear of mass journalists’ protests which occurred during Kuchma’s regime).

Elections 2006

On the wave of disappointment with the new authority political forces earlier accused by orange politicians as criminals return to power. Having kept silence till the parliamentary elections 2006, the white-blue (Party of regions), which consist of influential politicians of Soviet times and young criminals mostly from Donetsk region, got the majority of the voters’ loyalty credit. But this didn’t help much and the struggle for the control of power started. For this purpose, „regions” pulled socialists (former participants of Orange Revolution) to their camp and their leader

Oleksander Moroz was named a "betrayers". Also Party of regions started to buy members of parliament of other fractions to get more influence in the country. The leader of the Party of regions had become Prime-Minister and started to attempt to obtain presidential powers. The whole country witnessed a brutal struggle for power, bargaining over posts and property, all dirty politics. The Donetsk guys started slowly but surely to take control over everything. But at a certain moment, they had gone too far.

Facing the challenge of losing the power and turning into "wedding general" Viktor Yushchenko, urged by Yulia Tymoshenko, who having made the second place in the elections 2006 in fact received nothing, dared for the quite risky move to issue a dubious decree to dissolve the parliament. Further political quarrels, in my opinion, could be a subject of interest only for the political analysts.

Elections 2007

The most interesting part starts from the civil activist's point of view. The struggle between the orange coalition on the one hand and the Party of regions, communists and socialists on the other hand showed how power has been based on force, money, ability to manipulate and make pressure, how politicians don't care about laws and constitution. Desacralization of authority which started during the Orange Revolution, succeeded greatly during this period. Generally speaking it has become clear for everybody that politicians are cynical liars and bastards, who look at people as at voiceless cattle and their resource.

During last six months, the discussion whether the interim elections should be held or not has been accompanied by mass rallies of people who were hired and transported to the capital, conflicts between controlled law-enforcement institutions, cynical courts' judgments ping-pong.

Thanks to all this, people started to treat elections as a necessary instrument of their lives on which they don't have any particularly influence, but which can be used to earn some money. It is not about democracy anymore. Political parties used explicit agitprop targeted against their rivals. As one of my friends told about the campaign: "you could clearly see the

voter's portrait from the advertisements: it is an angry, hungry and poor person with low intellectual level - lumpen proletariat and pensioners". More and more you could hear the message of the necessity of the strong fist and an authoritarian leader. Limitless populism. One journalist once made a joke that if all the promises of politicians had been realized, communism would have come true. Although majority of political parties talk about conducting neo-liberal reforms, leftist rhetorics still overwhelms the majority of the social promises. Issues of language and cultural differences of the country are widely used to split the people.

On the other hand, it is quite positive that people started to be more and more disappointed in our politicians - take into consideration the low turn out level (63,22%) and overcoming of the 3% barrier of the option "Against all parties". I would like to believe that it is not pure ignorance, but a way to voice the consideration of the existing role of the voter imposed by the political system. In the latter case, it could be considered a contin-

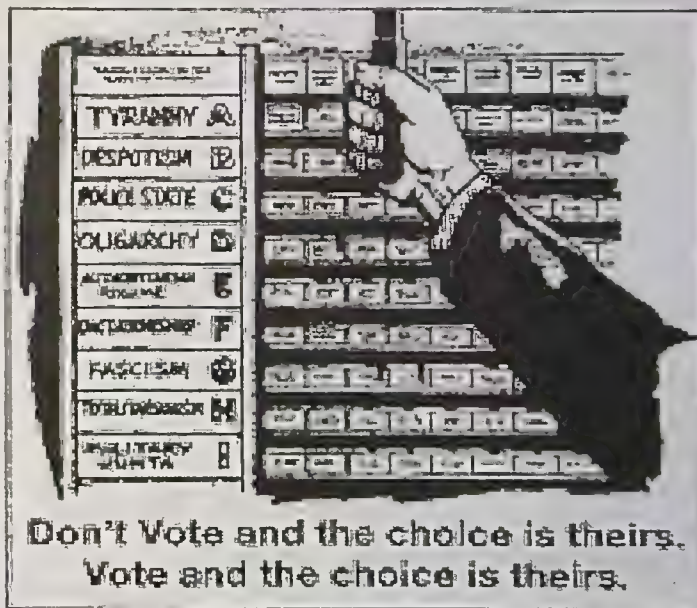
real alternative to that we were proposed; that people are disappointed in politicians and see every politician who comes to power, irrespective of ideology, forget immediately about his/her promises. So, such a system shouldn't exist.

Trying to bring our ideas to people, we used graffiti, internet. And during election day, activists in Rivne made a "Food not elections" action.

We have to notice that except for us, there were also ultra-right groups calling for boycott. Some of them were agitating for voting against everybody. But their motivation of boycott was different from ours. They did it because of not having an opportunity to take part in the elections and get to parliament.

Also the biggest Ukrainian ultra-right party VO "Svoboda" (Ukrainian union "Freedom"), according to some information, having received financial help from the Party of regions, could make an expensive enough election campaign with anti-immigrants and xenophobic slogans.

To sum it up, we can say the struggle for power among different groups of oligarchs is going on. Yushchenko wants to cancel the results of political reform which rob him of a few means of influence. Tymoshenko - the one who has got a huge support in these elections and the one who will attempt to become leader of the state in the forthcoming presidential election - will help him with this. However, concerning her authoritarian character and manner, this does not mean anything good. From this point of view the Party of regions, as a party which had taken the first place, although not so many percents as it wished, will strive to convert this into



uation of positive changes launched by the Orange revolution.

People have been disappointed in rallies and demonstrations, but on the other hand, I believe they start to distinguish between fake bought-up actions and the ones organized by the real civil activists.

Boycott-2007

Of course, anarchists had no other choice than to boycott these elections. But except for passive indifference we were blamed for, we were trying to present boycott like it is in reality - active protest against representative pseudo-democracy. We told about a

money and property.

The situation of people will become worse. State Soviet-like officials will make neoliberal reforms in the country irrespective of the ruling party. The rest of property will be tried to be stolen. Social rights will be curtailed. Housing and communal services will be reformed, a number of state monopolies will be privatized, an anti-social labour code will be passed etc. Poor people will become poorer and rich people will become richer. And in such conditions, it takes maximum activity and putting energy in the struggle against the regime.

Activist

Anarchists Boycott Elections

"The public, massively sick of the whole thing, is getting a message from anarchists: Don't Vote"

In Poland new elections were called after the ruling coalition fell apart. The elections, which will be held at the end of October, probably will have similar results like the last ones, with the exception of one party - Self-Defence - which is expected to lose many voters. So it is a costly farce where politicians sling mud at each other, tell lies and make false promises and waste millions in both private and taxpayer money. The public, massively sick of the whole thing, is getting a message from anarchists: Don't Vote.

The Anarchist Federation, as is its tradition, called for a boycott of elections. Instead of passive voting every four years, it calls on people to get involved in active participation in all social matters, instead of representative democracy, it calls for direct democracy.

The campaign is usually met enthusiastically by many, which the exception of the liberal establishment and party left which try to get people to vote for "lesser evil" parties. Typical elements of the campaign include billboard improvement, visits to political campaign meetings, leafleting and public meetings.

The campaign is already underway and should get more intense as elections near. Activists in Torun demonstrated at a meeting with Kaczynski. Anarchists around Poland are making leaflets, texts and video clips. Activists in Warsaw have organized some street leafleting and stands and have improved some billboards. Actions are planned in other cities as well.

Polls are deceptive and vary but most of them show the right-wing Law and Justice Party, slightly ahead of the right-wing Civic Platform. The elections will be totally dominated by the right; besides these parties, the

League of Polish Families are showing favourable poll results after they formed a block with the far-right "Polish Right" party and the national-

ist libertarian (as in free market libertarian) Union of Real Politics. The center-left coalition LiD of post-communists and free enterprise capitalists will probably come in third place.

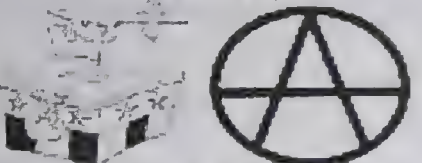
A little about the left side: despite the fact that most members of left groups (not center-left) reject the coalition LiD because of SLD's practices when they led government (including

sending troops to two wars, participating in secret CIA prisons, undermining the labour code, agreeing with the church to give up the abortion issue, etc. etc.), it seems like many leftists will vote for them, since they follow the logic that they should vote for parties that "have a chance".

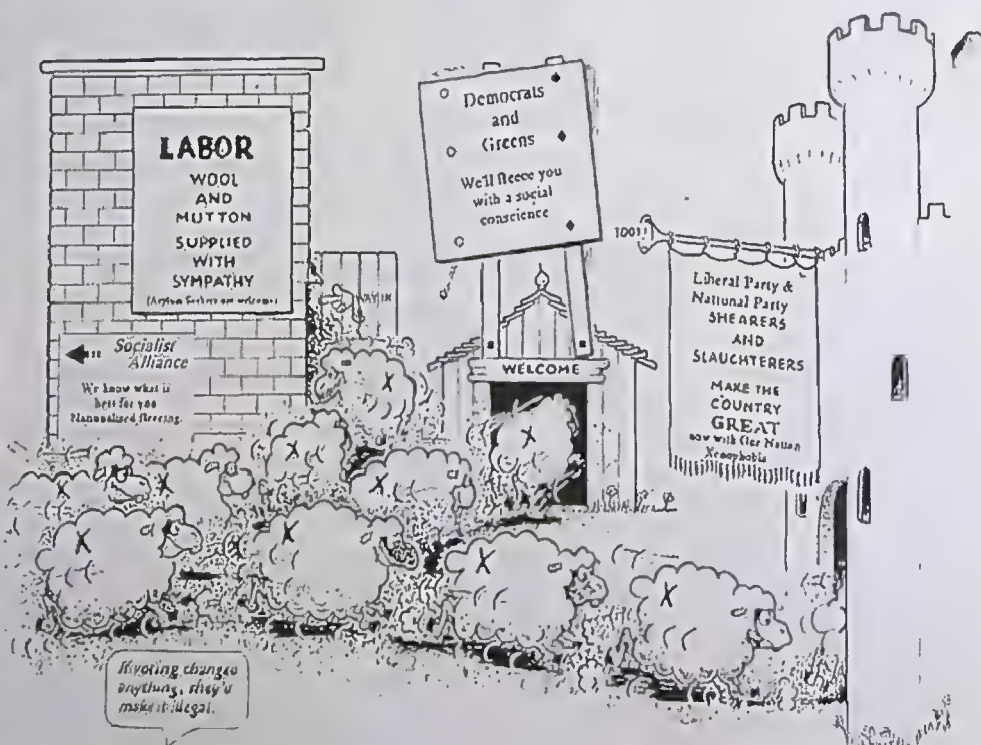
Those who want to vote for "real leftists" then are left with a choice of two strange parties: the Labour Party or Self-Defence. Both are very problematic. The Labour Party is a mix of leftists and conservatives and recently caused a scandal by organizing their lists in such a way that their number ones on the lists had the same names as popular politicians in those cities in the hope that people would vote for their list by mistake. Self-Defence, upon the organization of the new elections, decided to invite left politicians, including former PM L. Miller, who wants to split the post-communists, and former MP Ikonowicz, leader of the New Left and member of the union Workers' Initiative. Not only the left is divided about this, but also some anarchists who like these people personally and don't mind this shady politics.

Probably as a result of these shady political ties between these leftists and political scum, for the first time even some of the pro-party left seem to have become sympathetic to the Boycott Elections campaign and see that power, or even the quest for power, corrupts. Currently polls on the main leftist website show that after the post-communists, most readers plan on boycotting the elections.

WHOEVER
YOU VOTE
FOR,
GOVERNMENT
WINS



ANARCHISTS
ARE FIGHTING BACK



Statement of the Polish Inicjatywa Pracownicza (The Workers' Initiative) about the Upcoming Parliamentary Elections

We have no choice during the upcoming election. We can observe only scandals of the parties which are only fighting about power and none of them are thinking about workers issues. Their promises that their aims benefit us will never change our minds. We know that professions created by the ones in power are nothing else than a crop of lies.

What their real aims are was seen by the president of Kielce in August this year. He sent armed security forces to nip the strike of the MPK drivers in the bud. It reminds us of some incidents from the past – protesting workers at the Cable Factory in Ozarów that were beaten up, (during the time of SLD rule), and workers of Lucznik who were shot by police (AWS times). Nowadays political and business elite try to reach for power using only violence and lies towards workers. It was like this from the very beginning of their governing, since 1991 when the police brutally attacked protesting MPK drivers in Białystok. We should realize that it wasn't only the communist regime that used violence. It has constantly been used since 1989 by the leaders of every party.

Throughout the years, the names of different parties have been continuously changing but the faces remain the same. Hasn't Lech Kaczyński, the president of Poland, already ruled Warsaw? Wasn't he the president of NIK, the Attorney General in the AWS government? At the same time didn't the Kaczyński twins backed Walesa Donald Tusk who backed him too? Weren't they together in the same party? Yes, they were. Today they are arguing but tomorrow they may make up only for their own dealings and profits. It is a clear democratic contradiction. They need our votes now so they promise that they will help those in need, take care of the poor and build common capitalism. These are all

lies and empty promises. If the workers gained anything for themselves in the past years it was thanks to their own determination, protests, strikes, demonstrations. We didn't get anything from them, all we have, we had to take ourselves.

All the politicians, mostly rich, picture themselves as protectors of the poor. The truth is, for all those years of their playing, more and more people have to live on the edge of poverty. The stratification of our society advances. The workers' rights have been broken many times but now they claim that the economic situation has improved and that the standard of workers' lives has increased. They promised that the minimum wage would be increased. They want to buy our votes. Right after the election they will start ruling as they want, which most probably means ruling against our good. One of the possible scenarios is that the Liberals will win and the repressions of workers begin. There might be a coalition of PiS and PO, then, the liberal-conservative alliance will be able to change any law, even the constitution itself. Yet, there are some aspects we can be sure of: the position of employers who are able to pay back will improve. The workers on the other hand will bedfellow with the drivers in Kielce. The government will answer their claims with violence.

The prosperity won't last forever. The first symptoms of their breakdown will show up. Sooner or later the unemployment

will grow, the wages will decrease. We already know that we can hear their promises about wages' increase but on the other hand the raises are coming. We will have to pay more for flats, electricity and food. The prices are at the European level so we demand the European income. We don't want the 20/30 % price raise, we want to earn 4/5 times more. We want our salaries to be like those in Western Europe. The managers and other officials earn already like in the West, but the workers from Poland and from Eastern Europe are still the cheap labor in the EU.

The real change can be done only by common social protest. Instead of voting we should demonstrate, strike and boycott the election. Only common protest can bring change. We repeat: our dreams don't fit to the ballot-boxes.

Inicjatywa Pracownicza (The Workers' Initiative) call all workers to boycott the elections and for a general strike. We call for social protests. We demand proper living conditions. We demand a free, self-governing and righteous society.



"We plan to undermine the deficiencies of representative democracy and will suggest our views about direct democracy and local assemblies"

Local Elections in Bulgaria 2007 – Parade of Thieves

After 17 years of "democratic reforms" and the almost mythological readjustment to the „global trade market" orientated economic system, the upcoming local elections in Bulgaria on the 28th of October, will be the most interesting, in terms of human foolishness. The pure facts surrounding this year's „elections" are also worth men-

tioning.

The biggest ballot paper will be in the town Sandanski-1.40 meters. For the production of the 11 millions envelopes for the election, 120 tons of paper will be used. Altogether, 4300 mayoral seats as well as those of 5234 city hall advisors will be under siege. It is the first year when voters in the big towns

will be able with their majority to elect their regional mayor. Last but not least, according to some prognoses these elections will cost 9.4\$7.180 euros.

All this vaudeville is starting with thousands of candidates, tiring enthusiasm among the voters and amazingly long and complicated ballot papers. After a short review of the candidates

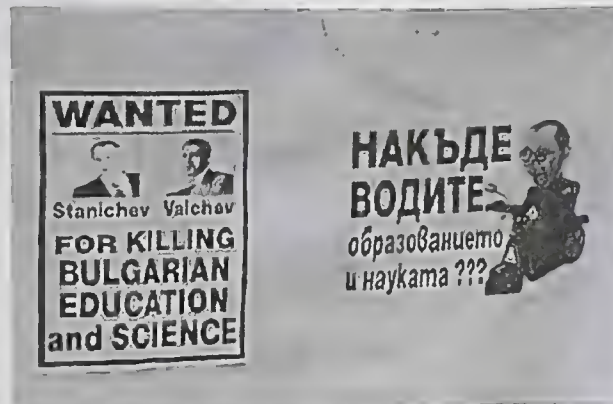
for the elections in Bulgaria, it becomes clear that beneath the nice words, numbers and names, hides the reality of an oligarchic regime in one "banana" country, which even then, is supposed to be named democratic elections. It is also a symbolic fact that for the first time, people born in 1989 (the end of the 30 year communist dictator's regime of Todor Givkov) will be able to vote. This will, of course, not prevent some mafia gangs from winning some seats through traditional corruption.

One of the candidates for mayor of Shumen is the businessman Deyan Kasabov, who publicly announces his biggest pride and joy - his car "Mazaretti" that costs 170 thousand euros, which he will exchange for a "Maybach" for half a million euros. Some other candidates for the elections are gaining ground with their campaigns just because they are participating in the show "Big Brother". In Devin, another small town, the candidates for the seat of the mayor and mayor's assistant are two brothers, ex-policemen, which were fired for disservice. Others, are just coming out of prison or are well-known in the public as heads of essential mafia structures. The best example is in Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria where there are 31 candidates for the mayor's position: from a military officer -officially known as a secret agent of the "ex"-regime, basketball coach, ex-fashion model and ending with the candidate of the radical right wing-proprietor of folk clubs and tae-kwon-do fan.

This wide variety of candidates, who do not belong to any traditional political party, is not a coincidence: this year the local institutions will also be responsible for the money coming from the European Foundations (*Bulgaria entered EU on 1 January 2007). This fact is motivating the formation of large amounts of new business partnerships and associations, masking themselves under the immunity of civil organizations. The members of these new formations are coming together through their economical interests connected either with "grey economy" (legalized black market) or taking over specifically branch of the economy, use of resources in favor of mafia structures. The latest have on their back the shadows of bigger political parties, which stand behind their new innovations, when their pockets are well fed up with money. There is a big possibility that this new structures, playing the role of local feudalists in small villages and towns, will be able to come officially to power much more easily now.

In Bulgaria there is a long history of

buying votes, and replacement of voters. Very often, for example, newcomers and workers in the cities on the sea resorts are used for this strategy. Other big contributions to the national democracy is the so called "ethnic vote" (*It is a common strategy among the political parties not to have solutions for the problems of the minorities, so that the same ethnic groups become an easy, manipulative and trustable voting potential, for example, they use the votes of Turkish and Roma peoples). This somehow proves, that those that count the votes, have the most votes in the end" and win the game. The showcase coalitions between right and left, liberals and socialists in some areas show that the bet is big and there is no logical way to



track and forecast the general positions and chances of the parties, taking part in the election campaigns.

Topics such as: the shockingly high prices (*according to statistics, Bulgaria has the biggest inflation out of all the EU countries); the corruption from the top to the bottom of the state institutional organs; the organized criminality on the streets and also among the upper-class; the low-paid and old-fashioned educational system (* in the last 3 weeks, teachers in Bulgaria, supported from the syndicates, were striking with the demand for 100% increase of their salaries and immediate reforms in the educational system); one of the worst organized health systems in EU, the fully inadequate and incompetent state policy - all these truths will be just suitably ignored by the elite. These facts are not of big importance even for the middle class people in Bulgaria, because they are used to think that "what is not affecting me is not a problem at all!"

So, anyway the peoples foolishness is overwhelming, as we also mentioned before.

The autonomous group "Anarchy-Resistance" is preparing an anti-election campaign. Until the 28th, we plan to undermine the deficiencies of the representative democracy and will suggest our views about direct

democracy and local assemblies. We find the local elections a perfect possibility to heighten awareness about the importance and the power of local autonomy (self-governance of local structures). Because on a regional level, the people can more easily recognize that they are exactly the ones who are aware of the problems of the local community, and also how important everyone is in solving these obstacles with common efforts.

The big political parties are trying to get their people into the power positions in order to easily transfer state money to more private foundations, and in this way, are able to finance their future "political" structures. In the big cities of Bulgaria, the social division continues to grow,

which tends to result in total "ghettoization" of the poor people and different areas. The public resources (taxes etc.) are already flowing into privatized services, from which only a very few people actually earn from. At the same time, the construction of isolated, luxury quarters are financed and these infrastructures will be maintained in the future from this public purse.

It looks like we will soon live in a society where the wealthy minority privatizes the profits and just covers the expenses for the account of the majority. Or, in other words - classic neo-liberalism! We believe that we all have to oppose this reality now, with strong determination! In other cases these realities will be strengthened like concrete highways under the flow of money. We think that the same political party that will have the most mayors elected, will win the coming parliamentary elections. And that is why, before it gets too concretized, we want to boycott it. News that in some schools, striking teachers, pupils and their sympathizers will try to stop elections from happening there, is giving us a lot of hope. We are skeptical that this will happen within a broader scope of society but it will cause panic in politically powerful waves. This time, while chasing the "big fatty sausage", the state has revealed its true face.

Hopefully the people will see it, remember it and will start to act!

**Autonomous group
AnarchoResistance,
Bulgaria
2.10.2007**

*Translated from the text from
<http://aresistance.net/theory/current/014.php>*

Bus Drivers' Strike in Kielce (Poland)

Workers' Self-Management as a Victory?

After 17 days the bus drivers in the South Polish city of Kielce have surprisingly won their strike. The sale of the communal bus company MPK planned by the city's mayor has stopped and MPK has been given to the workers instead. The strike had been preceded by months of confrontation. One day before the end of the strike, one of MPK's operation yards had been brutally evicted by private security guards and then recaptured by the striking bus drivers on the next morning.

MPK employs 630 people, 380 of them are drivers, one of these, is a woman. The 160 busses are old and keep breaking down. For years, the company has been incurring losses, according to the workers not least because some years ago the city divided up the company into the actual bus company (MPK) and a traffic planning authority (ZTM). ZTM is supposed to manage the public traffic "market" by organising tender procedures, issuing requirements and writing timetables. De facto it only controls the MPK and pushes it into debt with unfavourable conditions.

A collective agreement conflict has been going on for two years. The last wage increase was six years ago. Five years ago, Solidarno?? and the two smaller unions in the company agreed to lower wages by relinquishing bonuses and extra pay in order to "save the company". After 30 years of service, drivers earn about 1,600 Zl net, newly employed drivers earn less than 900 Zl net. Most workers are between 40 and 50 years old. According to drivers, few young people apply. Over the last few years, many have resigned and gone to England or Ireland or have become truck drivers. Now Solidarno?? is asking 500 Zl more for everyone.

Apart from wages, workers also demand improved working conditions: According to the drivers, ZTM's timetables are unrealistic which means that on the one hand busses are never on time and on the other hand drivers have practically no breaks between tours. Drivers also complain that the bus that takes drivers home after the last tour has been cancelled which means that some of those who can't afford a private car have to make long walks home at night.

Last year the issue of privatisation

was added to the agenda. Before his re-election last year with 72 per cent of votes, Kielce's autocratic mayor, Lubawski, had promised not to sell MPK, but after the election he put all his weight behind selling it to the French Veolia Corporation (which also operates train and bus lines in Germany under the name of Connex). The unions were not against privatisation as such but demanded a "social package" with five years of job protection, high compensations for layoffs and wage increases. Veolia wanted to guarantee only job protection, and only for employees with unlimited contracts.

The conflict escalates when the mayor announces that the Veolia deal will go ahead.

Chronology

4 June: 480 employees participate in a strike ballot organised by Solidarno?? (without the other unions). 450 vote for strike.

19 June: The city signs a preliminary contract with Veolia. At the same time it tries to increase the pressure: ZTM organises a new call for tenders for the next ten years. Veolia says its will only sign the final contract if MPK wins the tender. The tender is tailor-made for the Veolia deal because it calls for high investments. In press interviews, the mayor says that MPK does not stand a chance against its many competitors. His bluff is called when MPK finally wins the tender in early August: There had been no other competitors at all.

21 June: MPK workers demonstrate in front of city hall and then enter the building and molest city councillors.

22 June: Warning strike from 4 to 8 a.m. Only 6 out of 160 busses go out into the streets. MPK management and mayor call the strike illegal because

w a r n i n g strikes may only last 2 hours. ZTM imposes a 300,000 Zl fine on MPK and threatens to cancel the carriage contract with MPK in case of further strikes. MPK management charge the

300,000 Zl to the account of MPK's Solidarno?? leader. The mayor threatens to immediately liquidate MPK and contract out the bus traffic to another carrier in case of further strikes.

28 June: Another 4 hour warning strike - but from 0 to 4 a.m., outside traffic hours. No reaction from management and mayor.

Late June to mid July: Several rounds of negotiations of the social package between unions and Veolia. No result.

2 August: MPK drivers collectively donate blood, which means they may take the rest of the day off.

10 August: Solidarno?? announces an unlimited strike starting on August 14. The mayor threatens to liquidate MPK immediately.

14 August: Not a single bus goes out into the streets. 200 drivers stand in front of the operation yard and refuse to let managers enter. The workers' assembly votes for an unlimited strike and elects a strike committee. The mayor refuses to talk to the strike committee because he deems the strike illegal.

15 August: A catholic Mass on the premises of the operation yard. It has been difficult to find a priest because the bishop - the mayor's brother-in-law - has prohibited his priests from saying Mass in MPK.

18 August: The city and Veolia have hired 80 replacement busses with drivers from other cities. The busses are supposed to park in the Pakosz operation yard, the smaller one of MPK's two operation yards, but cannot enter because 150 workers block the gate. In the end, strike-breaker busses park on a lawn outside town.

19 August: Veolia's strike-breaker busses service the city's most important bus lines.

22 August: 17 members of the strike committee are terminated without notice. Unknown persons throw bricks

ZAJAZD KIELECKI

Przewodnik kielecki ma to swój własny transport MPK, który jest w pełni niezależny od władz miasta. Niezależny od władz miasta, który jest w pełni niezależny od władz miasta.



at a strike-breaker bus.

23 August: City police write tickets because strikers have set up a small table for collecting signatures in the city centre without permission. The mayor and the Solidarno?? leader meet without a result. MPK's president complains that workers have settled down in front of his office with bricks and cement.

25 August: Another strike-breaker bus is pelted with bricks.

28 August: Loud and angry MPK workers' protest in front of ZTM's downtown offices. ZTM claims that four new companies have assumed Kielce's bus traffic starting on 1 September. ZTM triumphantly claims that Veolia already has 40 applications from drivers, Polski Ekspres even has 60, but these figures smell of bluff again.

29 August: 1.19 a.m.:

There are about 30 workers in the Pakosz operation yard. Most of them sleep in busses or private cars. Suddenly two busses arrive in front of the gate. About 70 security guards in riot gear jump out. They run onto the operation yard, pull sleeping workers out of busses and cars and chase them off the premises - hitting some of them with truncheons. Workers compare this action with police actions during 1980's martial law. The mayor says he ordered the action in order to prevent flammable fluids from catching fire. According to the workers, there are no fuel tanks on the premises. The security guards tell the press they were supposed to prevent a "terrorist arson attack on a bus". More likely, the operation yard and the busses which are parked there were to be handed to the strike-breakers.

8 a.m.: In a co-ordinated action, over a hundred workers storm the operation yard through the main gate and through two other entrances (a side gate and a hole in the fence on the back of the premises). The security guards are completely taken by surprise and flee to the office shack after brief and futile resistance. Meanwhile large numbers of police have been brought in but they only watch and tell the workers to use "no-violence". Afterwards, the president of the security company hired for the attack complains to the press that nothing like this has ever happened to him before: to have the police stand aside without supporting him. Nationwide public opinion turns against Kielce's mayor: unions and left-wing groups issue protests, even politicians and the media criticise him. National newspapers, which have hardly paid any attention to the strike so far, turn it into their lead story for the

next day. Broadcasting vans with satellite dishes pull up in front of the Pakosz operation yard.

10 a.m.: The voivod holds a press conference and attacks the mayor from behind: "There is still a chance that all MPK workers can keep their jobs."

3 p.m.: The security guards leave the office shack under police protection and the workers' whistles. They enter their busses and leave.

Afternoon: Talks between the mayor and the strike committee. Afterwards, MPK's Solidarno?? leader smiles to the workers: "Everything is going in the right direction." According to him, the mayor has promised that last night's event will not repeated - with two bishops as witnesses.

30 August: 1.19 a.m.: On the operation yard in Pakosz,

there are about 70 workers and some left-wing supporters who have come from other cities and have received a friendly welcome after short hesitation (this hadn't

been entirely clear considering the cultural gap between 45 year-old catholic moustache wearers and 25 year old antifa dreadlock wearers). Some sleep in busses and cars but most are awake and stand around in groups on the premises, some wielding iron rods.

10 a.m.: Continued talks between mayor and strike committee.

12 a.m.: MPK's Solidarno?? leader successfully ends talks with the mayor. He jumps out of the car and beams at his workers: "Everything is going in a very good direction." A press conference is being prepared on the outside while the workers meet to discuss and vote in one of the bus hangars. The result seems to be certain in advance.

2 p.m.: The mayor's, voivod's, bishop's and regional Solidarnosc leader's limousines pull up. MPK's president is missing because he has already resigned. Then the result is announced: The strike is over.

MPK will not be sold to Veolia but transformed into a "workers' company". According to Polish privatisation law this means that 15 per cent of shares are given to the workers for free and that more shares up to a total of 60 or 70 per cent but at least 51 per cent are sold to them. There is no mention of the price or other details. The mayor takes back the sacking of the strike committee members and the liquidation of MPK and exclusively contracts the

city's bus traffic out to MPK. The workers shout their thanks after the end of the press conference.

A victory for the workers?

It still remains to be seen what this result will mean for them. When I asked a member of the strike committee after the press conference about the wage increases the answer was: "We'll see about that later." The fear of layoffs due to the Veolia deal is no longer an issue. However, the construction between ZTM and MPK is still an issue. So is MPK's debt, the need for investment in new busses and general necessities, which the self-managed company will now pass on to the workers. There are already some signs of the future atmosphere: MPK's Solidarno?? leader who sees himself in a responsible position now has proposed to treat half of the strike days as unpaid holidays.

Still, this result is a victory. The workers have fought, stuck together and forced the adversary to accept a result that he did not want. If everything had ended with the security guards' attack in the night of 29 August the workers would have had the entire nation's sympathy but they would not have prevailed. By recapturing the operation yard they won back the initiative. Now the mayor (MPK's acting capitalist) would have had to evict the workers again, and they would have been prepared. He did not have the guts to do that.

One of the reasons was the fact that big politics had already attacked him from behind and withdrawn police protection from him. Poland is facing elections and the ruling PiS party is making a last-minute attempt at looking "social" compared to the neo-liberal opposition. On 29 August, Prime minister Kaczyński met Solidarno?? and signed a social agreement. Without even informing the other unions or the employers the minimum wage was raised by 200 Zł to 1,126, and public sector wages will also be raised. The agreement was

explicitly designed to evoke the famous August 1980 agreement between Solidarno?? and the state! This would have been spoiled by a rough police attack on Solidarno?? activists. Instead Kaczyński chose to rain on the mayor's parade. In the end, the workers will have to pay the bill anyway.

Workers' Initiative
01.10.07

The Nurses' Tent Village in Poland

This summer, several thousand nurses from Poland's state hospitals camped out in tents in front of the Prime Minister's office for four weeks [1]. Their protest was aimed at raising their poor wages of 1,200 to 1,300 Zł (approx. 320 Euros) a month [2]. The tent action itself was triggered by police violence against participants of a large nurses' demo on June 19. Subsequently, several nurses from the leadership of the OZZPiP union [3] occupied a room in the pm's office for a week in order to force the pm to talk to them, while outside the building the "white town" quickly grew to about 150 tents in which an average of 300 inhabitants took shifts over the weeks. Most of them were OZZPiP activists who came on their free days, took holidays or union leave for the action. The nurses quit their camp without concrete results when the pm left for his holidays on July 15.

Everyone loves the nurses...

The "public" received the protests very positively. A great majority in the country supported the action and agreed with the wage demands, according to polls. Many people came along spontaneously and brought food, blankets or sleeping bags. People were impressed with the women's determination and optimism. Many seemed to have been waiting for this movement which exemplified the concerns of a large part of society: Poland is modernising and turning into one of the EU's extended workbenches, but wages have remained low [4]. The nurses also made the connection to the current emigration move: "Stay healthy, we're leaving!" or "We want to work not emigrate".

Support came not only from almost all left-wing groups and grouplets [5] but - at least verbally - also from the neo-liberal opposition who like anything that gets the religious-right-wing government into trouble. PO [6] leader Tusk, condemned the police brutality just like Warsaw's PO mayor, former central bank boss Gronkiewicz-Waltz. Stars and starlets from the cultural scene gave concerts and/or spent a night in a tent.

Even though other unions like left-wing Sierpiec' 80 tried to get their foot in the door of the action, their influence remained limited to participation in the tent village's assemblies, which dis-

cussed practical questions like protection from attacks. The OZZPiP seek their allies among neo-liberals - for instance they asked the boss of the private employers' association, Bochniarz, to negotiate for them -, but politically their monopoly was never questioned.

... but what exactly was it about?

Despite all the positive public feedback hardly anyone knew what actually happened in detail. For instance, many declared their solidarity with the "nurses' strike" although the nurses did not strike at all [7]. There was no lack of strikes in Poland this year, however, like warning strikes for wage-rises at Fiat in Tychy and Bielsko-Biala, at Opel in Gliwice, the bus drivers strike in Kielce, or the repeated wildcat strikes at the Cegielski machine factory in Poznań.

The nurses' concrete demands were as little known as the fact that there was no strike. Somehow they're asking 30 per cent more, right? In reality, the

health business for clinics, private practices and the pharmaceutical and medical technology industries. However, nobody knows how to finance this. On the one hand, raising the current health insurance contributions of 11.45 per cent or making the employers pay (in Poland contributions are paid exclusively by workers) are seen as politically unacceptable. On the other hand, an official return to budget funding would effectively block the road to commercialisation. So further small steps are being made on this road, like the introduction of private supplementary insurances (so far only between 1 and 2 per cent of people in Poland have something like that) and the creation of legal possibilities for doctors to make money on the side (so far they take an estimated 1 to 3 billion Euros in bribes a year from patients [9]). At the same time, the current system is kept on its feet with temporary exceptional regulations.

The OZZPiP demands to extend the abovementioned law for several years after 1 October 2007. They want to raise health spending - no matter if through subsidies or through rising contributions - i.e. they want to enlarge the cake and thereby also enlarge the total wage year by year. On the other hand, nobody has ever talked about a 30 per cent wage increase, neither in the future nor in the past. According to the OZZPiP, the 30 per cent cost increase through the 2006 law has resulted in an average 17 per cent wage increase. [10]

In the background: the doctors' strike

The fact that the 30 per cent cost increase was written into a law at all was due to a doctors' strike. And in 2007 they are fighting for their interest again. Because the biggest strike in 2007 - the longest and the one with the biggest participation - was the doctors' strike, which started on 21 May, current wages are very heterogeneous and some of them below 1,500 Zł. The doctors' union OZZL has made clear nationwide demands: They want three times the national statistical average wage for specialised doctors, double for the others. Thus doctors not only talk about concrete amounts but also mark the social distance they would like to keep. The union left the decision about strikes to local strike committees in individual hospitals - just like negotiations and agreements. According to the



OZZPiP did not demand a direct pay rise but demanded the extension of the law concerning the rise of subsidies to personnel costs from 2006. After a doctors strike in early 2006, this law made additional subsidies for the National Health Funds NFZ available in order to raise personnel spending by 30 per cent in the period from July 2006 to September 2007.

Polish hospitals are permanently skint [8] and regularly receive similar financial support. The public Polish health system is chronically underfinanced (Poland spends about 4 per cent of its GDP on its health system, compared to 10 per cent in Germany and 15 per cent in the USA). There are lobbies in all parties who would like to commercialise the health system in order to open up the potentially huge

union, there were strikes in different forms in about 230 of Poland's 800 state hospitals. In some places planned operations were cancelled, in others there were only emergency services, still others boycotted the settlement of accounts with the NFZ. Additionally, about 3,500 of 120,000 doctors in the Polish Health Service gave notice of termination. By now (late August) most hospitals have signed different agreements and many doctors have called off their notices of termination. OZZL leader Bukiel - also advisor of the ultra-neo-liberal party UPR - used the attention created by the strike and the nurses' protest to keep reiterating his main demand: privatisation of the Health Service!

Unlike the nurses' the doctors haven't endeared themselves to the public. On 21 August patients even occupied a hospital in Radom to protest against the doctors' strike. The doctors have neither shown a lot of consideration for patients nor tried to struggle together with the nurses.

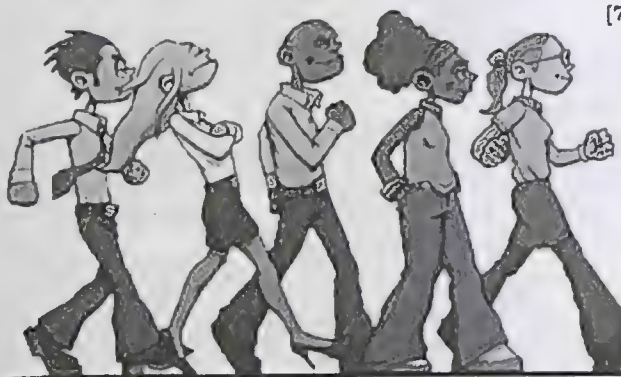
Similarly, the OZZPiP see themselves as a representation of certified nurses and keep their distance from other hospital workers (assistant nurses, ambulance drivers, cleaning workers etc.). Instead, they attach themselves to the doctors and their representatives who were frequent and welcome guests in the "white town". They still do not plan any strikes although their demands have not been met. In late August, the union put up some tents again in front of Parliament and talked to the press. They also promise continued protests in September.

And the nurses?

Although many nurses in Poland liked the action this does not necessarily mean that they share the union's view about doctors or about the privatisation of the health system. But they have not spoken out nor organised any actions of their own. The "white town" looked a lot more lively than the usual plastic-bag-dress union rituals in Germany but still the action was organised from above - even though it must have been great for the participating nurses to get out of their usual lives, get to know colleagues from other cities and bathe in the "public's" sympathy for a few weeks.

Maybe the nurses in the country simply think this: The average 17 per cent wage increase they received in 2006 still means low wages in absolute

figures (about 200 Zł more) and compared to other occupational groups. But they are among Poland's highest percentage wage increases in the last years. Workers in the automobile industry got less: After years of almost no wage increases at all, this year the union (Solidarność?) felt obliged to take a stand and organise warning strikes and then signed quick and poor agreements: For example, Solidarność? at Opel in Gliwice had demanded 500 Zł more per month and then signed a single payment of 2,500 Zł (approx. 200 Zł per month) with an average monthly net wage of about 2,300 Zł. In the postal service a spectacular wave of wildcat strikes last year resulted in a disappointing increase of 110 Zł monthly [1]. Therefore the nurses may speculate that the union will get them a good result again. By attaching themselves to the doctors who receive all the anger, they do not even have to spoil their moral position with the "public" and the patients. It remains to be seen whether this speculation will work out.



Footnotes:

[1] The German press reported extensively as well. It is not clear how many nurses actually participated. According to the union, more than 2,000 participants were registered after the first week. According to a report by Gazeta Wyborcza on 23 June, the police visited hospitals all over Poland on 22 June in order to ask how many nurses had gone to Warsaw or intended to do so.

[2] Information about wages varies widely and is sometimes anecdotal. This figure is taken from an interview with an OZZPiP unionist in the Workers' Initiative's current bulletin (ip.hardcore.lt/ip14.pdf). The actual wage depends on a number of factors including years of service, type and location of the hospital. According to Springer's paper Dziennik from 28 August "a nurse in Ożarów" currently earns 1,729 Zł net.

[3] Ogólnopolski Związek Zawodowy Pielęgniarek i Położnych (All-Polish Nurses and Midwives Union). It belongs to the third largest union federation Forum Związków Zawodowych. The OZZPiP's leadership has close personal links to the "post-communist" parties SLD, SdPL and PSL. For an overview over unionism in Poland, see "ArbeiterInnen in Polen seit

1989" in Wildcat 74.

[4] The following figure may be an indicator for how the relation of production and consumption has reversed: While the number of new cars sold in Poland has been sinking since 1999, the number of new cars produced in Poland has been rising for years. According to the Polish Agency for Information and Foreign Investment (PAIIZ), in 2005, 235,000 new cars were sold and 527,000 were produced. In 2007, production is expected to 800,000 (Gazeta Wyborcza on 27 August). [5] The OZZPiP argued that the protest was not to be "politicised" in order to keep out left-wing groups' banners and symbols. Some of them therefore came within the ranks of the left-wing Sierpiec 80 union. An anarchist workshop on non-violent resistance and civil disobedience was prohibited just like the Young Socialists' banner "Yes to wage raises, no to privatisation". Prime minister Kaczyński claimed that the tent village was infiltrated by "satanists and anarchists" when it was actually very clearly dominated by the OZZPiP.

[6] Platforma Obywatelska (Citizens Platform): largest opposition party with good chances to win the upcoming elections. Right-wing and national like the governing PiS, but less clericalistic and more neo-liberal.

[7] Internationally as well. A typical example was the "Declaration of solidarity to the striking hospital workers in Poland by the Networking Initiative of the Union Left (IVG), determined on the 9th IVG congress in Stuttgart on 1

July 2007": "The congress of the Networking Initiative of the Union Left with 100 participants shows its solidarity with your strike for a 30 per cent wage raise. (...) Long live international solidarity." (www.labournet.de/internationales/pl/polen_solivg.html).

[8] For example, in Kostrzyn on the Odra river a bailiff has repeatedly blocked the local hospital's bank accounts, blocking also wage payments to the workers. There have been several union protest demos to the bailiff's office. Meanwhile, the consulting company Deloitte has worked out a restructuring plan that basically proposes to lay off 500 non-doctoral employees. See the image "Patient, let the bailiff cure you. Signed: Politics."

[9] Rynek Zdrowia, 13 August 2007.

[10] According to the union, this 17 per cent average covers a span from 0 to 40 per cent (interview with the OZZPiP vice president Logina Kaczmarek on 22 August 2007 in Warsaw).

[11] See Wildcat 78: "Wilde Streiks der Briefträger bei der Polnischen Post".

Workers' Initiative
01.10.07

Poland's Health Care Workers' Strike: New Challenges and Old Problems

The Doctor's Strike and the Nurses' Occupation

Poland is entering the sixth week of a very serious doctors' strike. Thousands of doctors around the country have been protesting the state of the health care system and one of its main problems: low wages for health care professionals and long working hours, usually compounded by the fact that most people work extra shifts to make ends meet. Many doctors also have handed in their notice as a direct action, saying they'd rather quit than work under these conditions.

The strike was called by some doctors and did not relate to all health care workers, which irritated some other members of the medical profession, most particularly nurses, who also wanted to take action. In former strike actions, it has typically, for whatever reason, been nurses, not doctors who have taken part in and organized more radical direct actions, and this time the same happened. About one month into the strike, the nurses organized a mass demonstration to Warsaw and started a protest action that is finally breathing some life into the struggle.

On June 19, despite heavy rain, about 20,000 health care workers marched in Warsaw. Towards the end of the march, four nurses demanded to see the Prime Minister and ended up occupying one of the offices of his building. They have been there since that day, despite threats made by the government. Other nurses, demanded a meeting with the Prime Minister, who wanted nothing to do with this strike except to strongly criticize the workers; they have refused to leave from outside the PM's office. They declared that they

would stay there all night if they had to. They have been there already 5 days.

On the first day of the protest, the nurses occupied the street but come morning, the police brutally removed



them from the street onto the sidewalk. Two women were hospitalized in the action, one suffering a heart attack. The Prime Minister later claimed that the nurses were committing a crime and the only reason they weren't completely removed is "because they are women." He



claimed that "if they had been men, they would have been removed a long time ago". Having been cleared from the street, the nurses set up a camp across from the PM's office on the street in front of a city park.

The nurses have widespread public sympathy, but that doesn't mean that masses of people have joined

their action. Still, people not only from the political scene have arrived with food or words of support for the strikers. Their demands are thought to be reasonable: pay rises, better working conditions and a rise in the amount of the GNP spent on healthcare from the current 3.7% to 6%.

The Situation in the Health Care Industry

The health care system in Poland is in deep crisis for many reasons. The amount of the GNP spent on health care is on the bottom of the list of OECD countries and is kept low as a policy of forcing the system into the ground as a way to introduce privatization.

The system is also rife with corruption.

Salaries for doctors and nurses are notoriously low. There are no standard salaries, and what one earns often depends on numerous factors, but all too often, health care workers earn about half of the national average wage, often around

250-300 euros a month. Some workers get by only because they work extra shifts but in many cases, this overtime is not voluntary; the health care system is the victim of a brain drain with many of Poland's professionals having gone abroad in search of a better living. In many hospitals, people have to work more and more - even up to 80 hours a week - just to keep the hospital operating.

The state, which usually pretends to want to maintain the health care system, in fact does everything possible to push towards privatization. Many hospitals are charged with "poor management" and then debt collectors are sent to them. The government has been encouraging and empowering these debt collectors to go to hospitals and

repossess equipment and even to evict them. While it is true that some hospitals are in deep debt or are seriously mismanaged, the government's stance has done nothing to help them. In place after place, the government has closed down hospitals and clinics, overloading those that remain. Private hospitals have been moving into some of the hospitals abandoned by the state.

The Politics of Privatization

In fact, the state's strategy has been a brilliant way to spread support of privatization. Although the quality of health care ranges dramatically from place to place, many people in fact depend solely on privatized health care already.

In some areas, there is simply no public health care readily available. For example, last year during an emergency situation, we found out that there were no clinics working on the east side of Warsaw on the weekend! In a city of well-over two million people, no public clinic was available within a reasonable distance on the weekend. More typical is that people who go to clinics find that they have to wait in some unreasonably long lines. A trip to a clinic may mean that you have to take even a whole day off work to wait in a line. Yet other times you need treatment and are told "but we don't have this equipment or medicine", or that there is a great line. People are sometimes asked to provide their own medicines or, more often, to pay the hospital to purchase the equipment. It is also "understood" that if you want to avoid waiting in a long line for some procedure, some doctor can serve you privately - at a price. Recent figures show that the state allocates far too little money per person during their stay as well, except for politicians who are allowed to use special hospitals.

With the system in such a state, many people in fact have either bought themselves private insurance with a private medical provider or get this as a work benefit. These people, who are in fact perhaps the bulk of those with above-average paying jobs, also pay for the state system through mandatory contributions, and tend to complain that, although they pay, they are not able to make

use of the system because it's just too bad. Thus, although most people want to see free health care for the poor, there are segments of society that see privatization as something cost-effective for them as individuals. Add to this the constant neo-liberal consensus spread through the media and politicians and you have a lot of people thinking that privatization is the only option for the system.

Among those that fight for privatization is the doctor's union OZZL that called the strike. Although many of the doctors in it have a different idea, and although in the past year they have modified their politics slightly to be more "social", the OZZL is advised by right-wing think tanks that have developed a program of health care reform for them. The main idea behind this program is



that privatized health care will work better. Recently this union has proposed giving all citizens "health care vouchers" in equal amounts which they could spend choosing their own service providers.

Anarchists have unfortunately not always been able to come to some consensus on how to treat this issue. The movement in Poland was heavily influenced by libertarians who dominated anarchist ideology in the 80s and 90s, thus you find those that like vouchers. On the other hand, some anarchists recently follow in the ideology of the leftist "social state" and rather uncritically support the state institutions. In the past, there have been many long discussions on the health care system inspired by some articles written by those who want to tackle the issue from an anarchist perspective.

It has been my long-standing opinion that neither the state-run system nor the privatized one is the solution. Few people can support the idea of pumping more money into the state-run system when they are aware that a certain portion of it is

misappropriated by bureaucrats - but this does not mean that privatization is the answer in a society where the capitalist health care system threatens to create layers of society which can afford some health care, leaving others to fend for themselves. Some soft version of anarchist ideas can be promoted in the here and now as a solution.

The Union of Polish Syndicalists (ZSP), have taken the first steps towards a dialog on this issue. In a statement in support of the nurse's strike, we ask what can be done to overcome this impasse where the government runs things badly and bureaucrats are interested in their own profit and capitalists run things for their own profit, and badly at that. We maintain that part of the problem is that people do not control public spending directly and, if they did, they probably would chose to devote funds to social needs rather than buying Fl6s or giving sweetheart contracts to some politicians' families. Medicine should be "socialized", meaning that society should have direct control over it together with health care workers. ZSP proposes that the health care system come under direct popular control immediately. It also calls for other industries that are involved in labour

conflicts, for example teachers who also recently had some warning strike action, to join forces together. Finally ZSP calls for the general society, all of whom are affected by this issue, to show more support for the nurses.

The Outlook for the Protests

Unfortunately, the outlook does not seem to be very optimistic. Years of right-wing media and intellectual dominance have ensured that there are many proponents of privatization in society. Many ordinary people also do not identify with doctors. For some, they are seen as an arrogant class of corrupt profiteers determined to improve their material condition at the cost of poor people who cannot afford too many bribes. The media, especially during the doctors' strike, is filled with stories about "rich doctors" who live in villas. They quite deliberately stir up class envy, even though journalists on average aspire more towards the richer class of people than the poor and if priva-

tization of the health care industry really becomes more widespread, you'll find increasingly more profiteers from the industry living in villas that would make those few doctors' houses really seem quite modest. Surely the owners of private clinics and pharmaceutical companies already live in luxury and some are on the list of the richest people in the country but there's no big campaign against them in the media.

Besides the media campaign against "rich doctors", authorities decided to make a few spectacular arrests, further highlighting corruption. A chiropractor for example, was arrested for signing people's sick leave papers, apparently taking bribes to fake a few things. No doubt such things exist, but they are sickeningly being used by the government in their campaign against doctors. It might seem strange for people from other countries, but the current government is mired in populist rhetoric against "educated elites" which they use to manipulate the poor. Doctors and nurses are under fire and presented as some evil group of greedy bastards and even criminals that the government cannot negotiate with because they constitute some sort of anti-social element.

In one of the PM's favourite types of manipulation, he suggested that he might want to hold a "referendum". The current government is quite fond of holding referenda on questions they think they can win as they are confident they can ask questions which will guarantee that the people choose their ideas. (This didn't work for them in the past however when they held a local referendum on the Rospuda Valley bypass, sure that 99% of the local people

supported government plans. It turned out that only a small group of supporters voted for it.)

The PM proposes that people are asked whether or not they want their taxes raised to pay for the doctors' and nurses' pay rises. He claims that, "people need to be told the truth", that there is, "no way to pay people more without raising taxes".

Such actions of the PM need to be strongly criticized as it's a gross manipulation to claim to ask the people to decide, yet not to ask them whether they want to spend money on other things, for example the Polish military missions in Iraq or Afghanistan, which most people are against.

Right now, the outlook does not look too bright because society is very passive and neither the doctors nor the nurses have been able to mobilize people. Despite the fact that most people support at least the demands for pay rises and more of the GNP spent on health care as reasonable, especially in light of the fact that the economy, we are told, is always "growing" and "booming". One has to say the doctors organized an extremely weak protest: they rarely were seen on the streets or in the media and normally their union leader did all the talking. There were no "real faces" for the people to see, nor do people get a sense of determination to fight, despite the fact that in reality, many are very determined. The PR for the struggle was absolutely abysmal. The nurses on the other hand are much more visible for the average person, camped out on the streets of Warsaw. Only now with the nurses' action does anybody from the public actually have the opportunity to go and show any sign of sup-

port. And, quite sadly, for some people, only now that the nurses are camped out do they realize that we are in the midst of a very serious strike. Amazingly, the wide-scale doctors' strike made little impact on society.

One of the worst case scenarios would be some sort of compromise made by the Tri-Partite Commission, which I fear might actually be the outcome of this. Solidarity and OPZZ, which sit in this commission, are long-time supporters of privatization, as of course are the business institutions which sit on this commission. Some doctors who have given in their notice (and, in some cities this concerns whole hospitals), may be hired back as contract workers at slightly higher rates, or may try to work in the private sector. It is very likely that some hospitals may hire back some people but make cut-backs elsewhere to compensate. They may, for example, liquidate "unprofitable" wards; already in some cities they are discussing this. In the worst case, in one city they decided that one hospital doesn't need OB-GYN services because there are two other hospitals in the city that have them, so they'll just liquidate those services at the hospital where the doctor's decided to give notice. Of course it turns out that there aren't enough gynaecologists now in that city and such cuts will only force even more people to seek private services. Most likely, the outcome of negotiations through the Tri-Partite Commission is probably going to be further attempts to divide the doctors by giving in to some of them and deciding to phase in more privatization.

New "Workers Federation" Formed in Poland

A new **National Workers Federation** (KFP) has been formed by some activists from the **Polish Union of Syndicalists** (ZSP; in last issue of ABB you can find an interview with one of the members of ZSP). ZSP includes anarchists from different unions and some who were not already members of a union. One work place has organized a union group of about 20 members and signed a resolution to create a trade union. This union is in a multinational corporation and is one of the few organizing campaigns in this sector in Poland.

A statute was adopted which will unite unions from different workplaces and create local groups and initiatives.

The main idea is to guarantee direct democratic processes without leaders which means that the federation has no chairperson. No officials are given decision making powers and should only coordinate some tasks mandated by local groups.

Besides this first group, we are waiting on another workplace to join. Some local groups are forming a group to encourage the organization of contract workers and foreigners as well.

More information should follow as the situation develops.

White Slaves' Rebellion

It is a slogan used in June on the banners in the camp of hundreds protesting nurses and midwives in the centre of Warsaw. They wanted higher wages and reorganization of the medical service in Poland. As it usually happens with women in Poland, they were ignored and disregarded. Nurses aren't miners who already long time ago understood that if they wanted to change something, they had to win a battle on the streets first.

The Polish medical service has been in such a disastrous situation since the beginning of the 90's. It doesn't mean of course that in the communism they earned more money. Then the patients used to 'repay' for the medical care. The word repay isn't maybe the best one because quite often they had to do this even before an operation. The capitalism came and after some radical neoliberal reforms, the situation became dramatic. Hospitalists had debts, the wages were minimal. It caused resistance and protests of the workers. The situation of nurses and midwives was the worst. The first big strike of the nurses took place in 2000. For a few days they were protesting in front of the Health Ministry. The only ones who came to help were anarchists bringing hot tea. During one of those demonstrations an activist from CK-LA (anarchosindicalistic organization) got arrested because he was trying to block policemen pushing the nurses. He got sentenced a few years later. After the protests the government promised to raise the wages of nurses by about 202złote (around 55euro). Well, they never got the money.

Women on the streets

During this spring and summer

we could observe the second wave of big protests in the public health service. Physicians made strikes and massively gave notices. Nurses had another tactics.

On the 19th of June 2007 a group of around 100 nurses gathered before the office of the Polish Prime Minister. They wanted raises of their salaries and general reform of the medical service in Poland. Four of them went inside to give PM the postulates. He wasn't at his office so they decided to stay inside and occupy his office until he agrees to talk with them. The women outside had no contact with their colleagues inside but, or maybe because of that, they decided to occupy the street. In the morning of the next day a brutal police intervention pushed the women aside. Two of them were injured and another one was taken to the hospital. After the intervention more and more people came to protest, inhabitants of Warsaw and nurses and midwives from the whole Poland. There were already 1000 people. It was a big white camping. From the beginning of the protests there was an organised kitchen where anybody could take something to eat or drink. After another days miners from Sierpien 80, a radical, leftwing trade union, came to protest with them. It was an enormous psychological support because the nurses were still scared after the intervention and another one could happen anytime. Anarchists also backed the protest from the beginning yet they were trying to catch authorities' eyes because it could only evoke more troubles for the nurses. FNB and some squatters used to bring some food, tea, even TV.

After seven days the women

occupying the PM office left the building and met with the Minister. The meeting didn't bring any solution.

They see us everywhere

From the beginning of the demonstration the authorities claimed that behind the nurses there were some other groups who were using the strike as their mean of teasing the ruling ones. In the end they used the anarchists to threaten the nurses. In the second phase of the protests the police warned the women that they shouldn't have worked together with terrorists and extremists and if they don't stop doing this they will have to suffer the consequences. Unfortunately they got scared enough of the warning and believed. Of course it was just a provocation, they wanted to see how 'flexible' the protestants would be. From the 5th of July the camping newsletter was published where you could find many useful information. The newsletter was spread among the protestants and inhabitants of Warsaw. The protests ended on the 15th of July and didn't really bring any changes. What needs to be pointed is the fact that this government, like all the previous ones, showed the traditional attitude towards the medical service - ignorance. One of the ministers summed it up like this: if we would give way to the nurses, the other groups would start coming, too. This is exactly what they promised during the election campaign from 2005: the state of solidarity.

Zbyszek



McPolandisation: I'm Sick of It!

Ronald: Poland's new Messiah

Poor Ronald feels persecuted. A modern day Christ, if you will. McDonalds don't like competitors pissing on what they deem their territory. So when their arch nemesis Burger King re-entered the market in Poland recently, they jumped right up to the challenge to combat Corporate Enemy No.1. Complaining customers have now taken a back seat to position No.3, that is, after employees, who capture second place and get the silver medal of necessary annoyances for the McProfiteering Industry.

Battling Satan (aka Burger King)

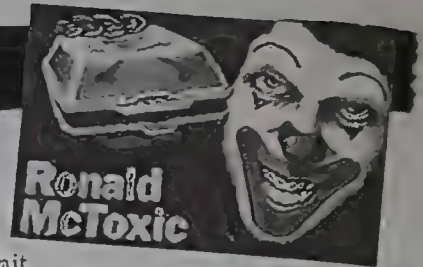
AmRest, which operates such brands as KFC, Pizza Hut and Fresh Point are a serious threat to the McPolandisation process underway amongst the 'playground-starved' nation's children and their too lazy to cook, 'easily

susceptible to the nagging factor' parents. And yes, Burger King et al. also have flour and water fries, rubber burgers and plastic salads which amount to something worse than shit (at least shit can fertilize land with some of it's nutrients). Therefore, the McCorpocrats have devised an acute plan to annihilate any possibility of alternate buns and burgers fucking up the corporal well-being of the biggest market in Eastern Europe.

The foulest and fattest fast food (note the deliberate alliteration to make myself feel poetic) business in Poland have decided to invest 300 million Polish zloty (€80 million) to renovate and expand 180 of its restaurants in the next 5 - 7 years. So when I go on a trip with my fellow teachers again next year there will be an ever greater omnipresence of the arching M's littering the Polish landscape. I note the trip to the countryside that we made together, as during our 10am pit stop, poor old me was left all on his own, as my fellow travelers embraced the McBreakfast option in an adjacent McDrive to satisfy their bellies.

McShitiness

Not meaning to be judgmental of my colleagues at all here. That's just the way the sesame seeds on the bun crumble - I made a personal choice to not use their Frankenfood service or piss pots as a result of hating everything they stand for and because I think their food looks like, and is,



shit.

So when anti-antiglobalization protesters throw a brick through a McD window I can totally understand why. Their record on union-busting, worker exploitation, crap food concoction and child manipulation is really second to none and deserves righteous animosity - albeit I wouldn't advocate any harm to come to staff or even the asshole management. A smashed window doesn't add any burden to the growing bottleneck in the Polish health service - a smashed face of a manager on the other hand would probably only reinforce their company loyalty and therefore be self-defeating.

According to the News.pl (<http://thenews.pl>), McDonald's operates 210 restaurants in Poland, including 148 so-called McDrives for drivers. 54 operate according to the franchise system. In Poland the brand has been valued at PLN 33 billion. It has invested PLN 700 million and PLN 400 million has been invested by its suppliers. The majority of products supplied to McDonalds restaurants in Poland come from domestic suppliers.

So, it looks like Ray Kroc's Golden Archways are going up and up in Poland, as Polish people's waistlines increasingly grow outwards and their appreciation for good food falls on infertile ground.



SHAC Demos in Warsaw

Protests: Divest from Huntington Life Sciences

SHAC stands for "Stop Huntington Animal Cruelty". The SHAC Campaign was set up to take action to close down the Huntington labs which experiment on animals. For three consecutive weeks Warsaw Vegans have organized protests in front of AXA insurance company which owns a lot of shares in Huntington Life Sciences.

The SHAC campaign has been successful in getting companies to divest in HLS. The activists here hope to put pressure on AXA by influencing public opinion. Passers-by and even workers of AXA were extremely upset to find out about the animal cruelty. The Warsaw campaign intends to continue until it wins.

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"The truth is that what is going on now is a result of years of hard work before"

Environmental Grassroots Protests in Bulgaria and the Position of Anarchists in it

In the last months the environmental movement in Bulgaria started to look something like the beginning of a movement indeed. There have been street blockades, big demonstrations and many other smaller and larger actions of various kinds throughout the country. We are using the word "movement", because all of a sudden, different actions were organized from many different groups and individuals and the struggles went a bit out of the NGOs into a level that is more close to the grassroots forms of organizing, but still the whole thing was working closely with the NGOs. It felt like all that increase in actions and all that came all of a sudden, but the truth is that what is going on now is a result of years of hard work behind. We will try to give a brief explanation of the processes that are going on here from our very subjective and somewhat anti-authoritarian perspective, so have in mind that there are many other opinions of what is going on here.

Now let's look of what has influenced the recent developments. In the last year - 2006 - there have been two large and somewhat successful campaigns that were coming not only from the NGOs, but from different grassroots initiatives as well.

What happened in Popinci?

For some years now, there has been a project from one Canadian corporation for the creation of a cyanide gold mine near a village called Popinci. The people there have been resisting the project, because of various reasons. Mainly, it is the understanding of the local people that the large multinational company, that is trying to undertake the developmental project, would only use them as cheap labor in order to be able to exploit the gold in the mine as fast as possible, the natural environ-

ment in the area will be destroyed and there will be potential health problems for them and their children. There have been nearly identical cases in other countries, (Rosia Montana in Romania for example), and the people in Bulgaria were very aware of them and the results of similar developmental projects in other places. Speaking about the resistance, it is good to know here that apart from the grassroots initiatives in Popinci and the other villages of the area, the struggle against the cyanide gold mine was supported from various environmental NGOs, individual activists (both Bulgarian as well as international) as well as from the local authorities. It is important to note that the vast majority of the local people were against the project, there was a local referendum and something like 97% who voted against it.

In July 2006, against the will of the people, the project started in the region and about two hundred people went on a barricade to stop them, the state had send riot police (gendarmarie), which was not finally send to attack the blockade, but instead, some people from the mafia came. There were some clashes with the "security" forces, and one person from the village was stabbed nearly to death with a knife after being on the blockade. The official police statement about the murder attempt is that he had committed attempted suicide, because of private problems - a proof of the cooperation between the state, the police, the mafia and the investors. In the end, after 36 days of constant blockades, the company went away and temporarily canceled the project. The most recent update on the case that we have is that on 25th of April 2007 there was information that the company might be trying to start the project again. The people there once again ready to fight. The same problem emerged in Rodopi Mountain, where the corporation Dundee Precious Metals wants to create another cyanide gold mine.

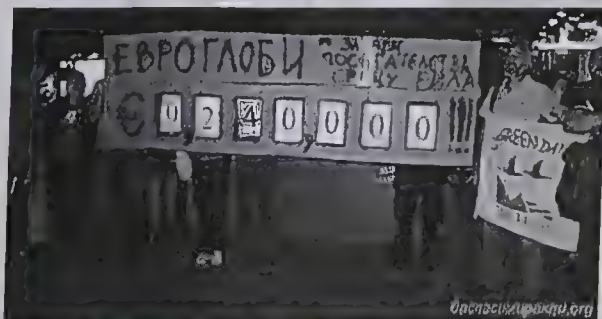
What happens with "Da Spasim Irakli" (To Save Irakli)?

The other big campaign

last year was the case with "Da Spasim Irakli". While it might have not been as successful as the case with the mine in terms of its own goals, it has succeeded to a much greater extent to influence the environmental movement in Bulgaria.

Irakli is a protected natural area next to one small village at the black sea coast. It is very popular because many alternative people use the beach there for "illegal" camping; it's still a very well preserved nature area with many rare and "supposed to be protected by the state" species of both animals and plants. In the beginning of last year there was information that there is a project of the construction of a resort village near the beach. Apart from the fact that the beach is important for a lot of people who go camping there, most of the society in Bulgaria are very angry about what is going on in the seaside - overdevelopment: huge hotels and resort areas, result in the destruction of the environment and make it impossible for people to have quiet and calm holidays between the huge concrete sites.

"Da Spasim Irakli" (To Save Irakli) started as a grassroots initiative in the support of that beach, first spreading call-outs in the internet, but pretty quickly it grew to a very big campaign that a lot of people showed solidarity with and it became a symbol of environmental struggles and the anger of people. There were many kinds of actions and the people from the group "Da Spasim Irakli" managed to have a very successful PR campaign with the mass-media and the struggle received a very strong and also positive to some extend mass media attention. The group is working closely with the environmental NGOs and many of the active people are actually working in some of them. That is probably why most of the people accepted the idea that in order to actually save Irakli their chance is to use the two directives of the European Union (Bulgaria became part of EU in 2007) forming the network of Natura2000 (I will summarize that network below). The limited success in the struggle itself was that the State had to freeze any developments in the area for a year. But while people were hoping that this





would be extended, the State has recently removed the territories where the development project is to take place and the construction might soon begin as the company is already preparing. Probably the most extreme cases were when some private security forces had destroyed some small infrastructures (like little tables, benches, places for fire etc.) there, which had been made by the people who had been using the beach "illegally" throughout the years, and the other one is when the backpacks of some people who were camping there were burnt.

All of the building projects in Irakli are approved and soon will start. One of the projects is financed by AKB Forest, led by former member of the communist regime.

I mentioned the EU Network NATURA2000 and that many activists (both NGO and grassroots) have accepted it as the only chance to protect the natural environment. But what is it briefly? It is basically a network that is supposed to exist in all EU member states consisting of protected territories, where the survivor of a certain part of some endangered species has to be observed and it is backed by two EU directives. The territories themselves had to be offered by experts from the NGOs and the state to approve them. Last year a large campaign started with the idea to back up the territories that had been proposed by the NGOs to the State and what happened in the end is that the State had accepted a much lower percentage than what the NGOs had expected. The effectiveness of NATURA2000 network could of course be arguable.

The case with Stranja in the summer of 2007

This is where most certainly everyone here felt a change. On 29 June the status of the natural park Stranja had been removed by the High Court Council, after the company that started the trial - "Crash2000" - won the trial that had started few months before. Natural Park Stranja is maybe the one with the most wildlife and preserved natural environment here so it was not unexpected that people became so angry. Very soon after, news arrived from different protests in different cities

that took place. The first 3 of them were the so called "flash mobs". On the second protest about 400 people blockaded the main crossroad in the capitol Sofia for 30-40 minutes. 35 people were arrested. Different actions went on throughout all the country for some weeks, and even there were no more blockades, many of the actions were "without permit", which here is considered a bit of a revolutionary act. The number of actions for such a short time, the fact that they were happening everywhere in the country as well as the way they were organized, was something that was unseen here after (and surely at the times of) the bolshevist dictatorship. This campaign managed to cause some pressure towards the state and in the end there was a decision by the Parliament that lead to the "return" of the status of Natural Park Stranja. This was very inspiring for people as they saw a direct effect of their actions, but that was still not a complete victory; first, because of the way that it was made - the law the Parliament passed is very arguable - as well as that now the situation with the illegal construction of the hotel by "Crash 2000" is just what it used to be two months ago. Still people went on passed that and accepted their struggle as a struggle for the entire natural environment in Bulgaria. On the day of the decision of the Parliament there was probably one of the biggest demonstrations in the recent history of Bulgaria, which was organized without the involvement of any of the authoritarian structures, where more than 2000 marched in Sofia shouting, "Nature, Not Concrete". The struggle is really going towards a direction of expansion in order to be able to cover all the environmental and nature preserving topics on a nation-wide level.

There are a lot of other and even bigger building projects like, "Super Borovetz" and "Panichishte" in Rila Mountain. The investors here are also big corporations, which come from off-shore zones and work with local capitalists with totalitarian past. The protests against them already started - on 29th of August another crossroad was blocked for an hour. One person with his two dogs was arrested for no reason.

What is the position of the anarchists in all this?

(No "official" position, but collectives such as "Katarzis", autonomous anti-authoritarian group "AnarhoSaprotiva", "Ecotopia" infoshop in Razgrad, who try to work closely and positively together, trying to help with little things and show solidarity.)

Certainly there are lots of people with different forms of horizontal views within the movement, but we have to acknowledge the fact that it is not the only case. There have been talks about the formation of a new political party by some of the NGO leaders (they see it as a way to make a change), some people were speaking on behalf of the movement etc ... As well there is a huge difference between the NGOs. For example, the environmental association, "Za Zemjata" ("For The Earth"), - the only horizontalist NGO in Bulgaria, often seems to be interested in forms of direct action, helps with and organizes street protests and actions, works together with grassroots activist groups initiatives (such as RoR-Samba band Sofia), etc, while there are those NGOs that are very professionally oriented (like ecology or different animals etc) and there are those which are really authoritarian and tied with the authority as well... But at the moment there is no open conflict between views and they coexist together as people are trying to find solutions. In its roots this movement is from below, even though the thinking of most of the people involved is not so radical.

The movement has also some problems. A lot of the people have a tendency towards patriotic/nationalistic thinking, (some even singing the national anthem on the biggest protest), which is a potential problem. The depoliticisation of politics is another problem - a lot of people from the eco-movement who define themselves as apolitical, turn quite easily to simplistic right wing solutions ("free market" promises, EU savior from above or nationalistic nonsense) and try to find solutions within the capitalist system.

Environmental problems are more than what people could cover, so the only way to succeed would be when the movement understands that it has to be part of a wider movement of the struggle against capitalism.

**Autonomous Anti-Authoritarian
Group "AnarhoSaprotiva"
August-2007**

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Press-Conference on the Investigations Over the Assault on the Anti-Nuclear Camp in Angarsk, Siberia

On 21 July 5 a.m. local time a group of boneheads attacked a eco-camp against local nuclear energy plants in Angarsk, Siberia, Russia. 21-year old Ilya Borodaenko died of his injuries, 8 more activists were heavily injured in the assault. An account on the running investigations as published by "Autonomous Action"

On 25 September a press conference on the matter was given in the Independent press-centre in Moscow. The meeting with the journalists was dedicated to the results of the first two months of investigations. Representatives of the civil rights organization Agora informed that the investigations and the confinement of 18 suspects is to be continued for 6 more months - up to 21 January 2008.

Participants of the camp once more reported the reasons for their protest camp. Autonomous Action and Preservers of the Rainbow came out against the enhancement of the capacities of the "Angarsk electrolytic chemical factories" (AECK) and the establishment of an "International centre for the enrichment with uranium" (MCOU).

Aleksey K (Autonomous Action) told about the basic events within the camp and the relationship with the law-enforcing agencies and local authorities before and after the raid. Obviously, the camp was in direct contradiction to the plans of Rosatom and the administration in the Irkutsk region, which had signed an agreement to work together with the main nuclear energy producers. The course of action for the development of nuclear energy enterprises, highly profitable (and environmentally dangerous) projects invoking the import of the products of into Russia, emerged into the project for the development of the AECK.

The policy of the law-enforcing agencies and authorities of Angarsk was aimed directly at disturbing the protest campaign, to force the environmentalists to break off the camp. Detention of activists on 14 July, the day of the camp's erection, by local police officers and plain clothes police, illegal questionings for several hours, videoshots, taking of fingerprints, confiscation of personal belongings testify of the fact, that the radical environmentalist were not wanted in the area. The police with

special urgency warned the activists of the danger imposed by the criminal situation in the city (where from such certainty?), the municipal administration refused approval for environmentalist pickets - they did not yet understand, that this is senseless - the pickets take place anyway.

After the assault on the camp, in the interrogations of the victims, the investigators were mainly interested in why the victims came to Angarsk,

continuous surveillance, but towards the idea of receiving any recordings on which the attackers could be identified they reacted very sceptical. An operative of the 3rd police unit from Angarsk, having taken account of the events from the camp participants, was first unwilling to put the nationalist shouts of the assailants on the record.

If the attendants of the camp didn't wonder how suspiciously well planned the assault had been and think of a possible "booking" of the raid in the first days after, then now recapitulating their memories of the course of events, the remarks of the police officers, unfamiliar people visiting the camp posing strange questions (e.g. who sleeps in which tent overnight) the young people tend to believe that the raiders did not act on their own or at least not alone on their own initiative.

According to Ramil Akhmetgaliev, legal analyst of the AGORA association, the inquiry should work on two versions at once - political extremism (doubtlessly, at least a part of the attackers belong to a nationalist group; another indicator are the shouts during the assault) and provocation of law-enforcing agencies, that had been given an

order from "above" to compel the environmentalists to abort their camp.

As Ramil informed at the press conference, the investigation group was shrunk to one member two weeks ago, who has a hard time working at a criminal case with such a big number of suspects, counting 10 volumes. For the last two weeks the inquisitor has been working on the prolongation of investigation time and preliminary detention. The court saw sufficing grounds for that and prolonged the term of detainment until 21 January. Currently, the 18 suspects are accused of hooliganism with the use of weapons.

AGORA maintains that the inquiry ought to have the convicts face the accusation of deliberate infliction of



who was the instigator of the camp, where the finances came from, what is Autonomous Action. The participants of the camp were told things like: "We warned you...", "You didn't have any business here". The investigators asked not to give interviews and not to spread any information about the attack to journalists - "in the interest of the investigations". In the course of five days the environmentalists weren't returned their belongings, which had been confiscated under the pretext of examinations, some things (sleeping bags, tents) were not returned at all so far (up to the day of the press conference, that is - remark of translator).

Policemen repeatedly reminded in personal conversations the fact, that the FSB had the camp under

health damage entailing death, and robbery. "Hooliganism does not implicate planned action as it is very clearly evident here" - said Ramil Akhmetgaliev. "The attackers used bandages as distinctive signs, approached the camp in secret and unnoticed of - because of the hills; obviously, they knew the place. Apart from that, they shouted very specific slogans, depicting their hate towards the people in the camp. This falls under the heading of the law against incitement of hatred or hostility out of the belonging to one social group.

According to the lawyer Stanislav Markelov, who represents the interests of the mother of the murdered antifascist Aleksandr Ryukhin in court, the law enforcing bodies lead inquiries on murders,

committed by representatives of nazi groups, by one and the same scheme. The accused are tried under the article of "hooliganism", while other accusations are put aside in the course of the trial, at the end of investigations. To achieve further examination is extraordinarily hard. "In Ryukhin's case thus the people who performed the fatal blows were not found", Markelov said. "But at least three convicted persons involved in the assault were given remarkable and real charges - from four to six years of confinement. And that is very important. It is important, that the fascist-partakers of such beatings understand, that these are no child's games, that for such "amusements" they will pay a high price."

Aleksey K. informed the journalists,

that the environmentalists' campaign against the heightening of the AECK's capacities and the establishment of the MCCOU continues. In August the vice-governor of Irkutsk region Mikhail Kolokov promised at the time of an action to have an official hearing on the problem. In September pickets of environmentalists and perturbed residents continued in Irkutsk and Angarsk. In Angarsk the local initiative collects signatures for an address of local residents to the governor and the president of the Russian Federation.

original article:

<http://autonom.org/index.php?nid=1221>
translated with minor changes by ge

The Roma Riots and the National Militia of the Bulgarian National Union

On the 14.08.2007 after 21:30 more than 300 Roma people went out in the streets of "Krasna Poliana" neighborhood in Sofia city. The people were shouting slogans like "Death To the Bulgarians" and were armed with sticks. There were clashes with the police that couldn't stop the riots for a long time. Only 1 person (roma) was hurt. During the next day all the media in Bulgaria have started to spit nationalistic bullshits about the Romani people only showing the case from one point of view. The media accused the police that they didn't react the right way and should have been more brutal with the Roma. The reasons for this riot have not been pointed out clearly. It was only announced that the Roma went in the streets because of a threat about a nazi attack for the same day. One day before the riots there was a conflict where some Romani people attacked a couple of Bulgarians at a café in the neighborhood. According to the police the beaten Bulgarian boys were not nazi skin heads, no matter their shaved heads. But a lot of people say that this conflicts have started because 1 rom boy was brutally beaten by a nazi skinheads and that's why the Roma wanted a revenge. There was no time left after these events and the Bulgarian National Union declared that they want to form a National Militia which is about to serve and help the Bulgarian people in such cases of riots or attacks

against them and it will also support the government institution in cases of nature disasters. Their leader Boian Rasate said that there is such a wish among the Bulgarians but no government institution did anything to create such a structure yet. Rasate also said that a campaign for gathering volunteers for this national militia will start on the 20th of August all around the country. The Bulgarian National Union has 3 sport clubs which are supposed to be the main cores for building this militia. The militia will be financed in volunteer principles and by donations from NGOs. Rasate presented the idea of this militia on a press conference where he also presented the brown uniforms for its members. According to the Bulgarian constitution the forming of such militaristic structures is forbidden. Now prosecutors will investigate the relations between Bulgarian National Union and The National Militia. The minister of interior Rumen Petkov also rejected the offered help by this national militia because like he said "it has brown taste". The Jewish organization "Shalom" has also declared that it's is really dangerous if such kind of militia will be created. Till now this militaristic structure doesn't exist officially but The Bulgarian National Union does its best to organize and instigate the young Bulgarians against the Roma and the other ethnic groups or "a-normal" people.



National Militia of the BNU

Ukrainian Security Service Started to Press Activists in Sevastopol, Crimea

In the middle of the last August it has already been known that in the eve of the Independence Day in our city employees of the Ukrainian Security Service expedited its activity. In the first place it connects with coming Parliamentary Elections. The "humanity glaring denial" henchmen rushed to take written explanations from couple of citizens that they won't "attempt" anything in Independence Day.

So, at the night from 31 of August to 1 of September almost in all districts of Sevastopol appeared swastikas identical with shape and obviously imaged by the same paint and the same hand. The places of putting weren't really "exclusive" (such as poles, walls, and even big-boards). It's strange that these "art works" weren't putted on white walls of shops and stations or similar places which are usually used by Nazi-patriots. The adherents of racial purity were indignant because these crosses were red and weren't tilted to the left. They decided that it was anti-fascists provocation.

And then the most interesting part began.

In couple days after that night incident policemen attended many people with proposition to visit

police office and without any warrants in that.

Questions that visitors of the "dark power" residence were asked were of the same type mostly. At first, questions were "Who are you?" and "What'd you prefer to do in your spare time?", "Did you see the images?", "Who from your point of view could paint them?" ("Do you suspect someone or maybe you know exactly?"), "Where were you at night from Saturday to Sunday?". Moreover they dig up dipper: "Call your politician position", "Call your environment", "What music do you like?". But the most utterly rude questions were in the end: "What do have against skinheads?", "Do you eat meat?", "Are you a 'veget'?" (they mean people being vegan), "Do you know somebody of anti-fascists or skinheads?", "Do you have any acquaintances from this active and aggressive movements?", "What is FNB?" (short time before the FNB action in the city was banned by the police which regularly patrols the usual location of FNB), "Call general slogans or 10-15 anarchists". From one of invited persons they demanded to type an explanation and than took notice of that his style letters are looking like the letters of graffiti ('Capitalism and Fascism are

Sucks', 'Authority cause violence', etc.), and of May-Day banner ("Peace, Labour, + Capital?!").

After that they made photos and took finger-prints. In addition, they showed some photos and asked to tell if you know someone from them. One of interrogated was threatened with allege in genocide. They also used manual power.

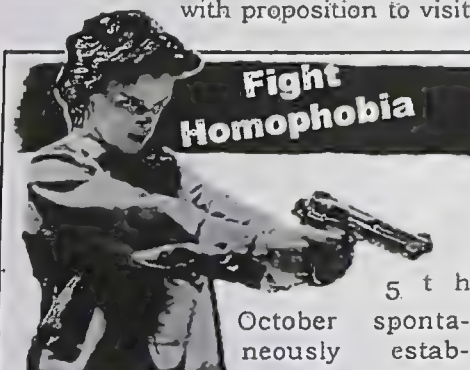
In one or two days after swastikas appearance some of these images were improved into flowers, moreover by the same paint. Eventually on one of the interrogations cops confessed that the flowers they drew by themselves.

As a result there is direct evidence of provocation!

At 30 September the Ukrainian Parliamentary Elections took place. Persons who have been interrogated came to their polling stations. But they didn't find themselves in check-lists. Trying to know what's going on they were told this is useless to demand to return their votes because they are disloyal and suspect and they won't vote anymore.

The FNB wasn't held for 3 weeks, but the new place for dispensation of food is found now.

Group "Vlasti net!" (No power!)



Fight Homophobia

5 t h

October spontaneously established initiative

"Love against prejudices" which join activists from Women network, Gay alliance, anarchists and other opponents of different kinds of discrimination, made contr-action parallel to "March against homosexuality". This march "against immorality, against perversity" was organised by protestant church "God embassy", public organisation "Historymakers" and "The victory is in your hands". They are trying to push changes into ukrainian law about public morality which would more than now limit rights of homosexual people and make discrimination legal.

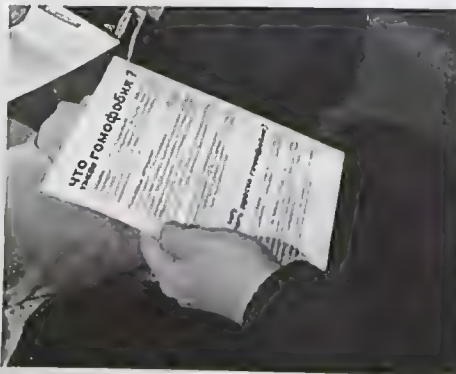
Activists hung the banner "Love against prejudices" on the bridge in

Homophobia in the Center of Kiev

the center on Maidan Nezalezhnosti (Independent square) before march has been started. Then they were spreading leaflets "manifest against homophobia", "mythes about gay and lesbians", "wash your hands after you met homophobia!" and other. They were talking to passing people and participants of march, were giving interviews to media. There were 15 of them.

Here is position of some of activists from these initiative:

We consider this march of propaganda of homophobia, the fact of it's realisations, as a sign of strange and scary processes having place in our state and society.



Nobody from passing-by and journalists ridiculed people united by aggressive religious sectarianism. Nobody expressed neither their indignation nor horror. People were just passing by hundreds of protestors holding banners like "homosexuality

is death of nation", demanding by megaphone and printings for discrimination of other people. Marchers with all their might were infringing rights upon and offending every person who has own right for private

life. And of course there were not police trying to break up meeting because they had nice and expensive flags, banners and news-papers and

their leaders are supported by mayor of Kiev.

And some of those few representatives of LGBT communities who nevertheless came, were not even to bring themselves to spread leaflets about homophobia "i dont wanna be

beaten at once...". And it doesnt surprise. We are not surprised already by shame and fear gay feels to crowd... Again there are people feeling social outcasts and people convinced themselves of nothing is happening.

We hope at least part of people took our leaflet (not those who threw it out noticed scary word "ho-mo-pho-bia") will think about something reading it.

zaraz



4th QueerBeograd Festival "The Sexual Revolution"

'Good evening and welcome to this evenings programme, Tonight comrades we will be introducing the topic of sexual revolution. First of all I want you to clear you minds of any unclean or improper thoughts - Voyeurism will not be tolerated, as we all know a revolution is for active participants... We will have no innocent bystanders here.'

'The revolution begins at home in our hearts, and our bedrooms, so let us demonstrate to you the politically correct sexual positions for the revolution. Myself comrade Sasa and comrade Maja will guide you towards the purest expression of true political vigour.'

'So comrade maja...what is the first political position we will demonstrate?'

These lines opened the 4th QueerBeograd festival "The sexual revolution", which took place from the 5th to 7th of October 2007 in Magacin (a recently opened artists/activist space).

3 days of Performances, concerts, discussions, exhibitions (Lamda Kragujevac, Transfabulous London), movies (DIY, supported by entzaubert Berlin) and direct actions reclaimed a safe queer space in Belgrade, Serbia. Participants from all over the region (Serbia, Croatia, Macedonia, Bosnia, Slovenia...) and other parts of the world came together, to connect, exchange, enjoy and celebrate.

Focusing on the topics of "trans issues" and "sex work" the festival created a space to establish visibility and to share experiences. Experiences of being Trans in the Balkan, and experiences of working in /around the sex industry. The discussion on "trans issues" was organized in cooperation with the first trans-group, which was founded in Belgrade earlier this year.

The evening before, around 150 people attended the opening of the festival, and enjoyed regional /international performances (with jet moon, jason elvis barker, milan djuric... viva

la diva, boban stojanovic, maja savic, sasa pokrajac), and concerts (Linsley Cockwell, Zluradi Paradi, Martin Laura Feer, VJ Oskur, DJane Ana).

On Sunday the 7th a bus full of queers left for Novi Sad to join the anti-fascist march against the neo-nazi groups "Nacionalni Stroj" and "Obraz". (www.afans.org/), while the rest of the crew organized a public queer picnic in Belgrade.

The festival was closed with the screening of "Venuz Boys" in Illegalni Bioskop (illegal cinema) and a presentation by JetMoon about her activist/artist work.

What is QueerBeograd?

QueerBeograd is an international group of people who decided to stand against the violence:

Because the first attempt at organizing the Pride Parade in Belgrade in 2001 was blocked by a large group of violent homophobic hooligans. Because this violence is a result of politics of war, clericalism, nationalism, militarism and machismo that has been mainstream politics in Serbia during last 15 years. Because second attempt to make LGBTTIQ (Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transsexual Transgender Intersexual Queer) com-



munity and politics visible on the streets of Belgrade in 2004. had to be cancelled because organizers again couldn't guarantee safety for the participants. Because the state and citizens are still ignorant toward problems of the LGBTTIQ population and all the others who are "Different". Because "Human Rights" are abused on a daily bases.

In this context to be queer means to refuse social rules and to constantly re-question the supposed norms of patriarchal tradition. To create space beyond the rigid boxes of homo or heterosexuality, allowing each other the 'privilege' of self-definition. To present a radical politics that sees the interconnectedness of all forms of oppression.

To read more about QueerBeograd, the previous festivals, or to contact us, check out:

www.queerbeograd.org
www.myspace.com/queerbeograd
queerbeograd@yahoo.co.uk

Anarchists Against the Wall Initiative Request Support

The mounting legal cost of the joint Palestinian-Israeli struggle against the occupation is forcing us to send this urgent appeal for funds. We are asking for your support to continue the work of the Israeli group Anarchists Against the Wall (AATW).

For the past four years, the group has supported the Palestinian struggle against Israeli occupation and specifically against Israel's segregation wall. Week after week, AATW joins the Palestinian popular resistance against the wall, in diverse areas of the West Bank, including the villages of Bil'in west of Ramallah, al-Ma'asara, and Ertas, south of Bethlehem, and Beit Ummar, north of Hebron.

Activists have often been arrested and indicted for their participation in the struggle. Fortunately, the group is represented by a dedicated lawyer, Adv. Gaby Lasky. Adv. Lasky has tirelessly worked to defend activists arrested at demonstrations or direct actions in the West Bank and in Israel. Though the legal defense she provides AATW is almost a full-time job, she has agreed to be paid only a token fee. However, the group has not managed to cover even this sum, and now owes approximately \$40,000 in legal expenses for over 60 indictments. In addition to this enormous legal debt, AATW activists are forced to spend large sums on transportation and phone bills.

Please make a donation that will enable us to continue this struggle.

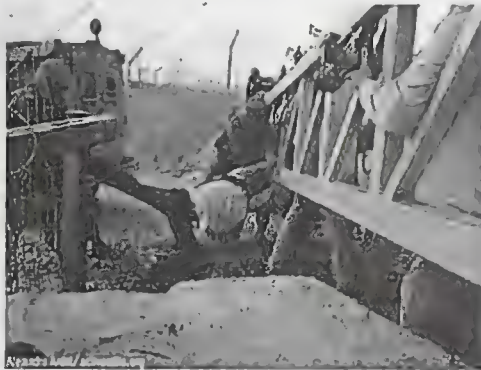
Thank you for your solidarity.

Anarchists Against the Wall

For more information about AATW, our actions and how to make a donation, visit our website: www.awalls.org or contact us at donate@awalls.org

The various struggles for a roof over one's head cross national borders

As the *Anarchists Against the Wall (AATW)* get more credit as serious activists, we are both invited to (and on our own initiative) join other struggles. Among the struggles within Israeli borders, we have recently been invited to participate in four main struggles. There is the gentrification project in the old Palestinian neighborhood of Jaffa (now annexed as the southern district of Tel Aviv). About 500 Palestinian families



holding Israeli citizenship were issued court orders for the demolition (of the whole or part) of their homes - to clear the area for gentrification by the rich (mostly Jews from Tel Aviv). The few direct actions AATW people were involved in have already prevented some demolitions for a while.

Following that, in connection with the Jaffa struggle, we were invited to participate in the struggle of 30 families from Kfar Shalem who were issued with eviction orders to make space for a building project (this is the old village of Salama where immigrant Jews were placed after the original Palestinian inhabitants were transferred out in the 1948 war).

A third struggle is that of the Palestinian bedouin of the Negev - the southern part of Israel. These are the indigenous, semi-nomadic Palestinian dwellers of the arid lands in the region where the city of Beersheba is located. Many of the original inhabitants were driven away to Egypt (Sinai) and Jordan between 1948 and 1952, during the birth of Israel. Some were forced to relocate within that region. Throughout the

years, the Israeli state made efforts to confiscate their land, which was used for marginal agriculture and villages, and to concentrate them into a few new towns.

The latest wave of suppression involves the demolition of more than 100 houses, with court orders for the destruction of whole villages. Lately, as part of the struggle, they and their Jewish supporters invited AATW activists to join them. A protest tent camp was recently set up in Jerusalem, near the Parliament.

And the fourth, somewhat different, project is that of the homeless tent compound in the centre of Jerusalem. They are the present tip of the iceberg of some tens of thousands of people who lost their homes due to the neo-liberal policy of the Israeli State, that privatized public housing projects and refuses responsibility for housing problems of the very needy. The tent camp is organized by veteran social-struggle activists with long-established contacts with the extra-parliamentary left and with the anti-authoritarian left. We were naturally invited to join them. Some of our members have spent days and nights there. The struggle against homelessness in general and against the eviction of the camp in particular is on the agenda.

Yesterday evening, we had a joint demonstration in Jerusalem of the three struggles: the homeless camp (which



initiated this demo), The Kfar Shalem people who will soon be homeless too, and the bedouin activists. About 300 people participated in the demonstration. We marched for about an hour along the two main streets in central Jerusalem towards the prime minister's official residence. The AATW drum circle and team of clowns made the march livelier. The speeches made by the activists of the three struggles stressed the joining of hands of Israeli Jews and Israeli Palestinians. Afterwards we marched to the homeless camp in the centre of city and socialized there before dispersing.

Source: Centre of Anarchist Information
www.cia.bzzz.net



Five Hundred Monuments of John Paul II Must Finally be Enough ... Against Catholic Hypocrisy

In Torun, city of infamous ultra catholic and anti-semitic RADIO MARYJA, local activists traditionally protested over the monument of Kopernik which represents the hypocrisy of catholic society. The third monument of John Paul II in this city (there are about five hundred in Poland), costs half a million zloty, of which the city office paid 200 thousand. The target of the action was to draw the attention of the local community to the amounts of public money spent on projects which do nothing to improve the quality of life of the people.

(...)

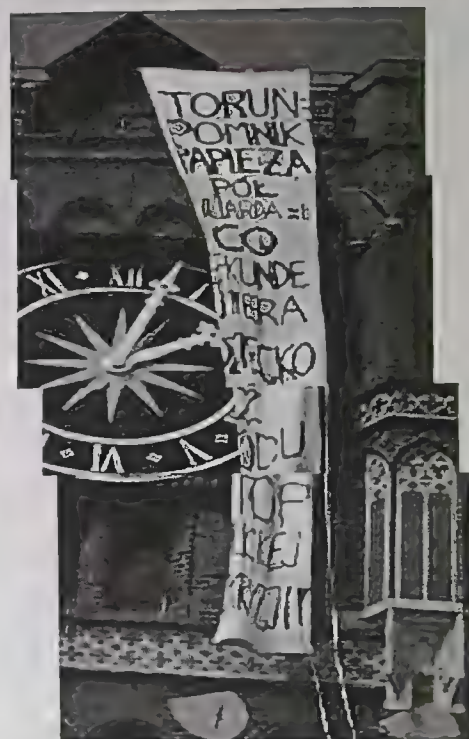
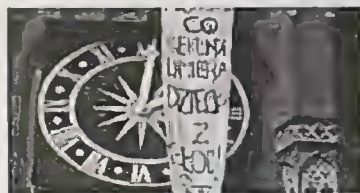
Different organizations in Poland said, that nearly 10-15% of children under the age of 14 suffer from hunger and eat at most, one meal a day. According to present estimates of minimal subsistence levels per person, it costs nearly 350-390 zloty per month.

As people representing an anarchistic view on the social relations, we are against spending public money on initiatives which do not directly effect the improvement of living-conditions of the poorest inhabitants of our city.

Quote from the Anarchist Federation - Torun:

"In account of the present situation of health services, and considering the financial level of services of the social state it is senseless and unfounded to spend public money on another monument in the name of "catholic values"

Anarchist Federation - "Torun"



Report from the 3rd Free Festival

Razgrad September 2007

The third Free Festival was organized in Razgrad. On 22.09.2007, the town park was full of young people, excited by the idea of sharing things they don't need, instead of throwing them away. We were lucky that the weather was good and sunny. The festival started at 15:00 and more than 60-70 people came. There were even some people from other towns and 4 friends from abroad. The free market was offering various kinds of clothes, music CDs, patches, magazines, stickers, vegan, ecological and anarchistic leaflets. There was a big interest in the last issue of the anarchist zine *Katarzis* and for the new DIY zine called *Hliab & Liutenitza*. Our friends from the Bucharest anarchist group (www.fight-back.tk) and a lady from the German anarcho-feminist collective *Erinyen* brought a distro with many CDs, zines, patches, badges, bracelets and ear-rings. There was also, as

always, a free vegetarian kitchen. This time the menu was: vegetarian moussaka with soy, potato salad, baked potatoes, baked desserts and fruits. The high spirits were supported by some good punk, hardcore, ska tunes. The traditional net foot bag contest was organized and 8 teams took part in it. After the game there was a yoga workshop and around 30 people formed a big circle to stretch and do some exercises. When the sun went down the weather became colder and some of the people decided to warm up practicing their ska/punk dancing moves. The festival finished at around 21:30. There were some clothes left and we gave them to the old-age home for people with mental problems. We are very happy that the idea of this festival finds fertile land in our town and more people get to know the anarchist alternative which are contra to today's capitalist and consumer society.



Anti-Fascist News

Anti-Fascist Offensive 2007 in Czechia

It seems that antifascism is currently the biggest mobilization topic for the Czech anarchist movement. Even though the nazi's strategy is to prepare their public appearances in secret and announce it just a week before (or even in a shorter period), local antifascists are able to react quickly and prepare adequate counter-action.

Antifascist resistance not only reacts to nazi activity, but works proactively as well...

For example, the *Good Night White Pride* campaign is very active in Czechia, with several decentralized groups working on propaganda, gigs, etc. Another local activist group, *Winston's kids*, announced "the best puller of fascist propaganda" contest. Those who bring the largest amount of pulled down nazi stickers and posters would win some interesting prizes. Last but not least, the rise of Nazi activity also activates a true skinhead community—recently two antifascist skinhead initiatives were reactivated. SHARP are trying to reorganize themselves and a new, local, Prague anti-fascist skinhead group, *Stenata 69 (Small dogs of 69)*, was set up. Also, punx joined the resistance (see Kladno report below). Antifa also strikes in virtual space. On the holocaust commemoration day, antifa hackers attacked and put down for four days the web pages of *Narodni Odpor*, the biggest nazi group in Czechia (see MayDay report).

And what about fight back? Czech Nazis have been trying a new strategy in 2007. They've just basically decided to march themselves to death so they set up series of marches around the country. Although they managed high numbers for each march, (between 100-200), they've met antifascist resistance each time they appeared. This antifascist resistance is mostly locally-based, but is met with the help and solidarity of antifascists from all over the country, which usually motivates not only local activist, but new people as well.

Otrokovice: the first win

It started in January in well-known antifascist base, the town of Otrokovice ("Red Otrokovice" as they said). Around 200 nazis gathered at the train station to march through the city. At the same time, around 300 antifascists met only a few blocks away. When the Nazis started to march, the antifascists thwarted their

way. Barricades were set up and tons of free fruit and vegetables, (and some stones, too), rained uninvited guests. After several strategic changes in the march route, the police gave up and forced the nazis to go back to train station as they were unable to secure their safety. Even though the antifascists tried to attack the retreating nazis, the police managed to escort the nazis back to the train station where they read their speeches and finally went away. Several antifascists were arrested and some of them were accused of attacking police officers and for public disturbance. Afterwards, a few nazis, changing trains when coming back through the town of Prerov met trouble with a local antifascist crew...

Prerov: police party

Maybe that's one of the reasons why a fascist tourist club stopped in Prerov in March. Unfortunately, the nazi escort service in black was better prepared this time. Even the antifascists managed to gather in good numbers. Under heavy police attack, we weren't able to visibly disturb nazi march. As soon as the first barricade was set up, police—which heavily outnumbered ca. 150 antifascist—attacked the demo and managed to disperse it into several small groups that were chased around the city. Once again, a few people were arrested and accused. In the mess around a city, a few nazis were confronted on the streets not only by white antifascists, but also by local Roma crews looking forward to answering nazis with their own language—violence.

Beroun: a good fight-back

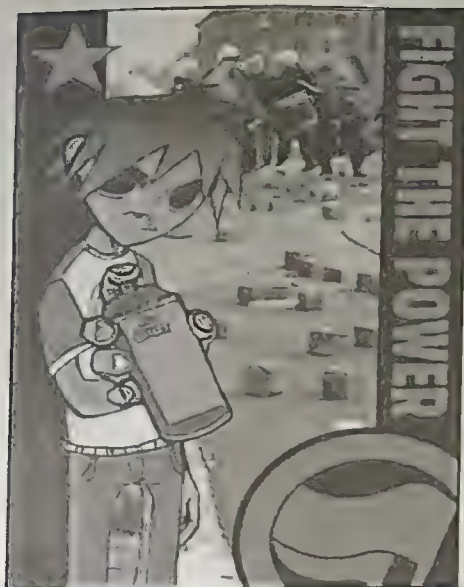
Meanwhile in February, nazis called

for a march in the town of Beroun. This time they targeted another popular issue, the planned US radar base in a nearby forest. In reaction, the antifascists decide to meet there to resist their stinking brown lies—even though the antifascists are also against this base, (see last Abolishing BB), this is not a reason to give up their antifascist work! Numbers were quite typical—around 100 nazis and twice as many antifascists. The antifascists tried to block the small bridge that the nazis had to cross on their way from the railway station to the town center. This blockade was partly successful, even though, after repeated police attacks, the antifascists slowly—meter by meter—retreated to the town center, where the nazis finally managed to read their speeches under the noisy shouting of antifascists. The corporate media hype of that day was of an unsuccessful attack of about 20 nazis, who managed to run around police and tried to attack antifascists. Those nazis were confronted by small antifascist security guards and beat back in a few seconds with a battle shot by all TV crews present... Guess what was the main topic on the evening TV news?

Kladno: punx against fascist

In celebration of the anniversary of Hitler's birthday, a nazi march was planned in the town of Kladno. This celebration of around 50 nazis was spoiled by a more or less spontaneous counter-demonstration of a local punk crew. *Punx Kladno* met in the same place and equaled the nazis in number. Despite a strong police presence, they successfully disturbed nazi speeches and the march.





Prague: is the grave of a fascist untouchable?

This question caused some hot discussion inside Czech anarchist/antifascist movement. Why? The day after Hitler's birthday, nazis came to commemorate the memory of Radola Gajda, Czechoslovak inter-war fascist leader. They came only to find his grave vandalized. Some time after this, an anti-fascist published a testament about who Radola Gajda really was, what he stood for, and what ideas he defended. All his life, he worked to establish a regime that would, (and actually did), send a lot of people to mass graves. Should we cry about his own grave?

MayDay

The biggest action so far was of course, MayDay. Nazis from the biggest group *Narodni Odpor* (National resistance, wanna-be leader-less resistance, decentralized kind of organization, stealing topics, tactics and everything else from left), met in a city of Brno. Around 500 (!!!) nazis showed up with a big support coming from abroad, but the March was dispersed by city authorities under pressure by the corporate media, (which was officially announced as a student march, not as a *Narodni Odpor* march), and then attacked and dispersed by police.

In Prague, another group of nazis marched to "honor a commemoration of police officers killed by anarchist terrorist in Haymarket, Chicago". And guess what? They booked the traditional place of the anarchist MayDay gathering, one of the islands on the Vltava river. This provocation didn't pass without adequate reaction. About 200 antifascists gathered to stop the nazi march. Once again, police worked as fascist security guards and literally cleared

the route for 30 (!!!) nazis, dangerously using petard as a dispersal tactic that injured several people. It could be seen on the faces of the nazis that they were feeling scared as antifascists tried to resist police several times. But in the end, the antifascists did not have much success. Nazis managed to get to the US embassy, thanked American police for a good job, (yes, that's true), and then in a bit of a panic about "leftist murderers" they got into one overcrowded tram secured by heavy police assistance and quickly went away. Three antifascists were arrested and accused, two of them for attacking police officers.

Warning: nazi tried to kill antifas

Every year, neo-nazis rally under the excuse of commemorating a dead comrade, (who was killed by a Roma guy, probably in self-defense). This rally has become another opportunity for showing resistance against neo-nazis. First of all, an article about the "fallen hero" was published on an Antifa website, describing his real personality as an outsider even within neo-nazi subculture who was notoriously unpopular during his life, but now, after his death has become a "hero" for nazis. Since then, nazis have promised revenge.

On May 19, about 200 antifascists gathered for an officially unregistered counter-demonstration. Five nazis came to scout the place, but were lucky to save their asses running as fast as they could. However, it quickly turned into police provocation as six antifas chasing nazis were surrounded by undercover cops within a few seconds. Police then came from all directions and surrounded the entire march. Everyone was unmasked and identified, but then surprisingly released!

In about twenty minutes, a march of about 200 masked antifas appeared, (many equipped with shields with antifa stencils). By continuously moving, it became impossible to stop it again as police and the march headed in the direction of the train station, (the meeting point of fascists). After several police attempts to stop the march and a few quick run ins, about 100 antifas finally managed to reach the station. Here, the cops managed to gain control and separated the antifas from a group of nearly 300 nazis. The fight was then reduced to verbal banter and shouting slogans back and forth. When the antifa demo dispersed and people began to leave, one nazi in his car drove full speed

into the crowd, apparently trying to hit as many people as possible by driving randomly from side to side. He managed to hit two girls, one of them was heavily injured, (fortunately she's now in excellent condition again). Even though the streets were totally full of police that day and there was even a police helicopter in action, police didn't manage to arrest the attacker on the spot. However, he was arrested later that day, (only the driver, even though there were another 3 nazis in a car), and was accused of four crimes for which he remains in custody until today.

During the night before this demo, a group of nazis attacked a crew of young skater. One of those attacked had three fingers cut off by a machete.

Greatest aftermath: nazi superstar

The entire action that day had a very interesting virtual aftermath. Antifa hackers managed to brake into one nazis' PC and get a set of pictures from that day; nazis drinking in a train, nazis giving nazi salutes in a train, nazis drinking even more in the evening, nazis, sieg-hailing even more in the evening, etc. This set of "behind the scenes" pictures of the, "elite of the nation" became a real bomb. Even a mainstream corporate press made reference to them and the article containing these pictures on our antifa website received 75.000 visits so far! This was one of the biggest humiliations for nazis in last few years as their carefully designed image of "nice guys" was seriously damaged.

Havírov & Liberec: nazis last breath

On June 6, neo-nazis announced their demo in the small town of Havírov, their traditional strong hold. However, only 30-40 nazis showed up, most of whom were heavily drunk. Then again, on June 16, they tried to gather in the small town of Liberec to protest against positive discrimination. Only 35 showed up, which made this demonstration a joke itself, even without any antifascist resistance!



Svitavy: antifa solidarity demo

Six years ago the last racial murder happened in Czechia in the small and sleepy town of Svítav. A well-known local nazi was sentenced to more than 15 years for this murder and therefore become a martyr for nazis. Since then, nazis have annually marched the town of Svítav for their "innocent victim of justice system". During this march, they also terrorize local Roma people, showing them that a lot of other potential murderers are prepared.

In response, local anarchist and antifas decided to show solidarity with the Roma people and commemorate the real victim of the Svítav tragedy, Otto Absolon, (the murdered Roma

man and father of two children). Around 50 people gathered and marched the town to his grave.

A week later, about 100 nazis marched through the town on their annual rally.

The Kamil case

Kamil Cech has been a proud nazi, one of the leaders of local nazi cell, a very active visitor of nazi demos and even an organizer of an upcoming demonstration. When he sent an e-mail threat to the antifa mailbox, one of the antifas tried to look for his e-mail address on the internet. He found that Kamil is very active on gay servers, looking for partners for sex! A bit weird, isn't it? Kamil is a

member of an organization strictly condemning homosexuals. Hmmm... So, this antifascist tried to pretend to be a gay-skin looking for sex. To his surprise, he received an answer quickly with Kamil's address, phone number and even several nude, sexually explicit pictures... Of course, the entire material received was published. Just to show the hypocrisy of nazis - during the day a leader speaks against homosexuals, during the night, he become one... They are not any kind of elite; they are just normal people just live everybody else. I'm sure you can imagine the reaction of Kamil's nazi comrades yourself :-))x



Trial Against Anti-Fascists Opened in St Petersburg

A trial against 6 antifascists was opened in St. Petersburg on 27 September. Due to the absence of aggrieved persons and witnesses the first session scheduled for 18 September had been adjourned. The antifascists are accused of hooliganism and organizing an extremist group.

On 17 September 2006 a mummified group had attacked a rally of the fascist party "Movement against illegal immigration" (DPNI). The fascist's rally was part of a Russian nationalist campaign taking advantage of violent

xenophobic riots, which had broken out in the Karelian town of Kondopoga by the end of August 2006 after two ethnic Russians had been killed and several wounded in a quarrel with a group of people from Chechnya in a restaurant, owned by an Azeri. There was a series of pogrom-like attacks against people with "Caucasian" appearance and arson attacks on non-Russian owned business which had continued for several weeks.

source: <http://piter.indymedia.ru/ru/node/3266>
edited by ge

A Solidarity Action with Russian Anti-Fascists in Minsk, Belarus

In Saturday 7th of August 2pm, an illegal action was organised in Russian embassy of Minsk in solidarity with Russian anti-fascists. Around 50 anti-fascists and anarchists showed up in Russian embassy of Minsk, in order to show solidarity with Russian anti-fascists and in order to point out that nazis may murder people in Russia with impunity. As action was illegal, it did not lasted more than five minutes. Protesters could only unroll banner with text "no to fascism", and carry portraits of four anti-fascists murdered in Russia (Timur Kacharava, Aleksander Ryuhin, Stanislav Korepanov and Ilya Bondarenko),

when police showed up and demanded to stop illegal action. Police immediately called OMON riot police, and began grabbing people.

All of the participators managed to leave the scene before OMON showed up. 4 persons were arrested, in following day all of them got a 3 days prison sentence to be executed immediately in a kangaroo court. Some 15 people went to support arrested in the court and managed to shout something to them. Arrested were in good spirits, but it was obviously that they were frozen in jail the previous night. They should be released today. There is a danger that one of the arrested will be expelled from university.



Antifa Rally in Novi Sad, Serbia

Serbian Nazis from the informal organization "Nacionalni stroj" (National formation) tried to march at Novi Sad, capital of northern Serbian province Vojvodina, a multinational and multi confessional region famous for its peaceful coexistence of different ethnic minorities and religions. Minor political parties influential in that region (social democrats and liberals), together with NGOs organized an anti-fascist rally in order to prevent the Nazis from marching in Novi Sad. Anti-fascist action Novi Sad (with tight links with social-democrats) organized a separate block within the protest. That block of radical anti-fascists was made of a mixture of anarchists, anarcho-syndicalists, comrades, queers, punks and alike.

A few days before the rally, the Nazi march was forbidden by police, but then clero-fascist organization "Obraz" (literal translation is: Cheek, but it actually means Honor) announced its solidarity with fellow Serb nationalists and promoted its solidarity protest rally. Nazis from "Nacionalni stroj" said that they are going to make their rally no matter what. In an atmosphere of tensions, on the 7th of October (birthday of some Nazi big shot asshole from WW2) ca 3-5.000 people gathered in Novi Sad.

Liberals and NGOs had their speeches, uninspiring and pointless for the most part. The stage was set in

front of a church. On its left side Antifa radicals took position. The Nazi rally should have been organized just down the street 100 meters away. On the back-right side of the stage, "Obraz" members and supporters gathered chanting nationalist bullshit slogans and singing nationalistic anthems. But riot cops prevented any contact.

Then the speeches ended and the protest march headed down the street with the Antifa block at its head. At one point Nazis were spotted in a restaurant. Immediately people started to yell at them, and give them big fuck you motherfuckers! Then the Nazis started to chant pre-prepared slogans that should somehow take the fascist stigma off their backs and portray them as god-fearing good nationalists.

But then some of the Nazis came across the yard of a restaurant (a property of Serbian army) right to the fence, just two meters away from police line and Antifa marchers. They did their usual saluting and grim faces, but then the other bastards in the yard started throwing stones at Antifa protesters. Some people got hit, some of them in the head. By then the response intensified and all the stones and more stuff was sent back at them. One of them got a cobble stone right in his fucking head.

All that time cops were letting them do their shit and were keeping an eye



on the Antifa march. It seems that they thought that the numbers of Antifa protesters were higher and that because of that they were more dangerous (and we're speaking about a bunch of predominately middle aged and older people including WW2 veterans), than the fact that the Nazi gathering was forbidden and that Nazis nevertheless started throwing stones at peaceful protesters. It lasted for about 10-15 minutes and then the cops got an order to start arresting Nazis. And it soon ended.

During the day 58 persons were arrested. Three of them were Antifa protesters, all the others Nazis. 11 arrested Nazis were from Slovakia. They were expelled from Serbia and the Slovak embassy denied them financial aid saying that they are to pay themselves for the legal expenses. All the help the Slovakian consulate will provide to the Nazis is just translation from Serbian language. Previously, 7 Slovenian Nazi assholes were denied entrance to Serbia and several Bulgarian Nazis were arrested in Belgrade.

Revolution Will Be Televised

"Fabrika Zvezd" (Star factory) is a format reality TV show in Russia, where young people are "trained" to be pop stars. Each week one of the participants is discarded after sms voting.

This year is already the 7th year of the production and one of the participants is 17-year old Margarita Gerasimovich (stage name "Dakota") from Minsk of Belarus (show is also aired in most of CIS countries). Margarita comes from Minsk hardcore scene, and has participated to *Food Not Bombs*. However, in the show she is singing pop music.

As you may expect, there has been a huge uproar in the so-called "DIY punk community", good part of which has been very condemning on her partic-

ipation. Margarita has not been hiding her positions, for example 26th of September she was performing in "Good Night White Pride" t-shirt in a free street concert.

The next week, 3rd of October, Moscow antifascists paid a tribute to her with a banner "Love Music, Hate Fascism - Dakota Forward!". These reports were published in "Dakota fancelub" of live-journal, where live-journal user may join.

Whatever you think about reality shows and pop music, the truth is that Margarita is one of the few, if not only person in former Soviet Union to have supported radical antifa in prime time with her own face and full name.



Ultra-Nationalist, Fascist and Neo-Nazi Movements in Russia

Interview

This interview was sent to us by someone and we are even not sure where it was printed originally. We do not have enough time to find and to contact the author in order to confirm if we could reprint it in our journal, but we could hardly imagine any reason why material of such important content should not be popularised with our modest capacities without having such a confirmation. At the same time we would like to stress that this is an interview made with activist not directly involved in the events. Therefore, if you want to compare this views and analyses with the ones of our Russian comrades check some other articles on topic of radical-right and anti-fascist resistance in Russia published in the past issues of ABB. However, we are giving here our words of respect to "Peter McNally" and "Uri Gordon" for setting this interview and invite you to lecture ... ABB.

Peter McNally (not his real name) has been researching the American and European far right for over twenty years. The recent murderous attack on the eco-protest camp in Siberia occasioned this interview, in which Peter uncovers some little-known facts about one of the world's largest and - to many Western anarchists - least familiar networks of ultra-nationalist, fascist and neo-Nazi movements.

Uri Gordon: I guess the best question to start with is, what kind of activities are we talking about here? What do these people do, and how do they organize?

Peter McNally: Well, it all depends on how well organized they are. Normally it's your typical skinhead bully-boy politics, beating up a Black or a leftist or whatever. Then a lot of times it's the tit for tat, fascists vs. anti-fascists politics that has a momentum of its own. Basically, one could say it's political gang warfare, though on a very minuscule level.

That doesn't mean that there aren't areas where people are pretty threatened about a very strong presence of right-wing people who, like in a lot of places, are in full complicity with the cops. Because the cops prefer them to the crazy fuckin' anarchists, right? So they can go, "OK, I don't understand your Nazism, but as long as you beat up these fuckers I don't like, I'll turn a blind eye. Oh, and here's some money for beer."

So that's the gutter level. Then the next level is the people who are being groomed, not so much for political office but for higher-profile activity. So like in the States or anywhere else, you might be a young, smart skinhead who later gets cleaned up, prettied up and becomes a more serious player within that political scene. And these people are there because they show a much better face than Ivan Ivarov, the stupid fat skinhead, and because they are far more erudite. That doesn't mean that a skinhead who's smart couldn't be one of them, it all depends on circumstances.

Then with the political parties like the National Bolsheviks (NBP) they have rallies and publications, a web site and conventions to show how legitimate the party is. Then you go to people like

Zhirinovsky, who is in a sense a right-wing liberal economically, coupled with a Russian supremacist geopolitical belief system. Or in the case of some of the more conservative rightist parties in Russia, there is a serious structure and part of the military and security apparatus is behind them. And these parties all have extra-parliamentary activities and networks as well.



UG: So when you say there's people who are being groomed...

PN: Who's grooming them? Well, it could be old-line far-right people who may have ties to the moneyed class. I mean, that's pretty typical. Within the business class you're always going to have a percentage of people who are very sympathetic to fascism or national socialism, they want to have stability and a form of economic protection, coupled with cheap labor rates. You shouldn't also underestimate the possible role of the more conservative parts of the military and the FSB, which is the successor of the KGB.

UG: The Moscow Bureau for Human Rights last year estimated that there were about 50,000 people on the Russian far right. Does that figure seem pretty accurate?

PN: Well, it depends on whether that's

people with sympathies or people who are active cadre. The NBP claims it has 15 thousand people. The skinhead stuff, I honestly couldn't tell you because it's so marginal, and because very few of those people ever put on anything, because a lot of them are so illiterate. I mean, that's the part of it that's more nebulous because these people are far harder to track.

With the NBP, all the demonstrations that I've ever heard about have either been in Moscow, St Petersburg, or the Baltic republics; Pamyat were much the same I think, more specifically mostly Moscow. I think the further east you get, it becomes more local. Again, there may be certain places that have big Oi scenes or skinhead subcultures. You may find out that there's some isolated places that have a very large population that's sympathetic. You might find some place in the middle of nowhere that's really, really nasty.

But because it's such a vast country it's hard to say anything general. Russia covers something like a sixth of the world's land mass.

UG: What can you tell us about the emergence of the modern far right in Russia?

PN: The first thing that's important for people to realize is that you actually had a large range of political discussion within the social context of the old Soviet Union. As with any totalitarian or authoritarian state, there's a misconception that there's a single monolith of ideas. In reality, there was a wide spectrum within the bounds of what was perceived as the boundaries of political dialogue.

So you had people who were more to the left of the main line, or far more to the right; however, they were still inside the discourse sanctioned by the Party. This is with the possible exception of

the Stalinist period – but it's true for the rest of the post-War period.

So like in any large bureaucratic system, you had a right-wing or an authoritarian tendency. In the old Soviet Union you had people who were extremely right-wing, in a traditional western sense, who would still be part of the party. One recent example is Lt. Gen. Alexander Lebed, who was Yeltsin's Secretary of the Security Council. I mean, he was really in contention – before Gorbachev, during the 1991 coup, and thereafter – and he was very right wing.

And then with the beginning of the collapse of the Communist bloc is when you had the start of a more overtly fascist movement, basically people who wanted to hearken back to a time of stability. And early groups like that were used by state security services as a way to quell the demonstrations. So like in East Germany there were East German skinheads, who might have a Nazi ideology or at least a Nazi symbolism, iconography, who were used by the Stasi to cause havoc for the demonstrators.

UG: In Russia, though, these movements show a very special ideological mix.

PN: Well, one of the most notorious groups early on was Pamyat, who were Russian-Orthodox Nazis, who were vehemently anti-Semitic and talking about a "Zion-Masonist plot," mixing in occult references and lots of other stuff. Coupled with that, they played to this sentiment... well, some people would say this is a bit paternalistic, the line that "the Russian people are always looking for a great father figure", which I'm not sure is true but it is one of the explanations.

UG: This is, indeed, ironically "paternalistic"...

PN: ...and let's not forget that Russia is the "great motherland", so it's even more ironic, "wanting papa to tell mama what to do"... Anyway, Pamyat broke up in the early 90s and out of it came Konstantin Kassimovsky's Russian National Union and the Russian National Socialist Party, which is the most straightforwardly Nazi splinter group, and that last put out a paper in 2003. More importantly, Aleksandr Belov who was in Pamyat now heads the Movement Against Illegal Immigration, which is pretty big and active right now.

At this point you also started to have Soviet exiles going back to the ex-Soviet Union, with the specific example of Eduard Limonov who set up the National Bolshevik Party. As in many

former Eastern Bloc countries, this party is difficult to discuss in simple left-right terms. Eduard Limonov was a dissident, he got an exit visa, he went to New York, and became a sort of important writer in the old Soviet exile community. Ironically his first book, which is about his adjustment to being in the US, being out of sorts and the whole diasporic experience, describes how he met this black guy and they became lovers, and it's like "well, we just needed each other".

UG: You mentioned earlier that you reckon that far-right groups actually have in them many gay and part-Jewish people, which I found a bit unbelievable.

PN: Well, it's mostly hidden, but on the other hand everybody knows Zhirinovskiy's father is Jewish, and if you saw the movie *The Believer* you know the story of Dan Burros in the US. It might sound surprising at first, but it actually makes sense in its own way if you think about it.

But anyway, Limonov later goes back to Russia, and because he is a very unique character, and because of his cultural niche as a writer and the rest of it, he got more press. And he actually had a column in the English-language paper in Moscow called *The Exile*, which was a paper for the English-speaking people who came to Russia to grab what they could after the fall. He also gets involved with some of the ties between the Russian mercenaries who fought on the Serbian side during the Balkan wars. But he looks to Stalin as a great period of social stability within the Soviet Union, and this is the part about National Bolshevism.

Now this goes back much earlier because within fascism, national socialism and what we look at as the extreme right, there has always been a leftist tendency, a socialist tendency in a classical sense. So in the '30s during the time of social upheaval in Germany you had the brothers Gregor and Otto Strasser, who were part of the German Nazi Party in the earlier days and had a more left economic agenda. Gregor Strasser was killed during the Night of the Long Knives, as he was part of a left-wing faction within the NSDAP. Otto Strasser, who died in '74, kept writing after the war. He was instrumental in the regrouping of European fascism in the post-war period. The Strasser brothers' writings re-emerged in the mid-80s to early 90s to become part of the whole Third Positionist discussion, which is influential in some of these groups. Otto Strasser was very active in far-right circles; however, during the mid-80s more doctrinaire and overtly "National Socialist" politics were

being reassessed in favor of losing the Nazi iconography, and putting forward an economic view that was more "left."

And you also had Ernst Nickisch, who would be a fascist or an extreme nationalist, and sympathetic to national socialism. But instead of looking at Hitler for his primary model for the Führer Principle, he looked to the outward popularity of Stalin and the rebuilding of Russia, et cetera. So he used Stalin for his model and was very open about it, and meanwhile in Russia you have far-right people saying similar things. So these are the original National Bolsheviks. It was a little-known party, and when Hitler was appointed Chancellor all these parties got null and voided and everyone forgot about it. But then in the '60s you have people like Jean-François Thiriart in Belgium who was a fascist and looked at Nickisch's writings and went "Ha, this is very interesting" and he started to mix the extreme left with the extreme right. These were very marginal views, so it's interesting to see that these ideas have now returned as the cutting edge of racist politics, particularly in Russia.

UG: So getting back to Limonov...

PN: Well, for him all this was a logical extension of where to push Russian nationalism, especially with the older folks, who might not have liked Stalin at the time, and it was not a stable regime, but it was a point of Russian dignity, et cetera. So that's sort of where Limonov comes from.

And another thing about Limonov is that he attracts a lot of people on the cultural margins. And in the late '80s and early '90s, because of punk rock, Oi and so on, you have the beginnings of what we'd now call Russian skinheads, in the sense of a worldwide skinhead movement, or a grouping of people who are aping right-wing skinheads in Britain. So you have people who are in punk bands, industrial bands or whatever, and he courted that because he was a marginal cultural worker and was sympathetic to those aesthetics and hyped them up. And these days he heavily recruits within



the Goth and black metal scene, which is probably the central cultural scene for the more avant-garde, out-there far right – the bands, the graphic art houses and so on are serious cultural players there.

UG: Now Limonov also worked with Alexander Dugin of the Eurasian Movement, right?

PN: Yeah, and Dugin... I mean, he's really a one-off. He's connected to the European New Right, which was started in the 60s by people like Alain De Benoist, who saw that the right needed to have a form of cultural hegemony and cultural analysis equal to what Gramsci wanted to achieve for the left. And they had the support of many parts of the old secret army organization (OAS) in France and Algeria, ex-collaborators and so on.

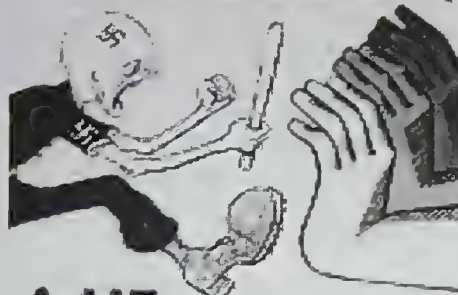
So Dugin reads this stuff, and mixes it again with geopolitical language and inherent Russian nationalism and Russian orthodoxy. Also Russian metaphysics and occult stuff, which is its own little world with its own national myths, its own occult practices. And you have ideas like that, especially earlier on in Eastern European fascist or ultra-nationalist circles, to have a cadre who are similar to the old religious warrior monks. This goes back to people like Codreanu and the Iron Guard in Romania during the '30s, who was also very popular again during the '80s, especially in Britain. And Dugin mixes the left and the right and old occult historical references, so for example he might talk about the "Society of the Spectacle of the New Templars in Russia".

Another person these people are influenced by is Julius Evola. He was a Dadaist who became very involved with occult practices and eventually his own brand of fascism. Evola was also incredibly important for people like Stefano Delle Chiaie and the Ordine Nuovo in the early part of the far-right strategy of tension in the early '60s in Italy.

UG: It was interesting to learn how the followers of Limonov staged these civil disobedience actions when they occupied the Ministry of Health offices and tried to occupy Putin's office in 2004, before they were banned. And this isn't the first time you have this heavy borrowing from the left – I mean, like with the idea of "leaderless resistance" that we hear about in English-speaking far-right groups.

PN: Well, this goes back to Louis Beam, who was part of the Klan. In the early 1960s the FBI had totally infiltrated the

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БОТИНКАМИ!

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Klan and other far-right groups, actually before they turned their attention to the new left. Later on in the '80s when you had the rise of Christian Identity and people like The Order and that – things simply became too difficult for them to work together in large groups, and more importantly, in large groups that had a leader who knew where all the bodies were laid – because many times that guy was the federal agent! Like, "He's a good typist! He's enthusiastic! He's willing to do things no-one else is willing to do! We like him!"

So Louis Beam was looking at leftist politics and the perceived success of the extra-parliamentary left, groups like the NWLF and the Weather Underground, et cetera, and he said "OK, we need to find a form of resistance where we don't need the traditional notion of leaders, because they're too easily compromised". So he thought about working in cells or small groups, and more importantly to set up a horizontal network of people who didn't need to have leadership, because he thought it was more effective. So it's not quite affinity groups or prefigurative politics, but it's somewhat inspired by that.

Then you had people in the States like Robert N. Taylor who was the national spokesperson for the Minutemen, which was sort of the beginning of the militia movement in the '60s, quasi-fascist gun-toting Americans who were really questioning the social changes that were happening in the '60s, who wanted to go back to a stronger... sort of a fascism with an American face. But because he was smoking pot and hanging around with hippies, he gleaned things that he thought were useful from their politics.

UG: So going back to Russia, what are these people's international connections like?

PN: Well, like with anarchism you have

this huge international supermarket of ideas, and like an anarchist could go from Israel to Argentina to the UK and get translated into French, you have these international networks on the right that have weird impacts in unexpected places. People like Dugin et cetera are very important in the international European New Right movement, and vice versa, because those ideas come over, so magazines like *Krisis* in Germany and *Elements* in Italy come across. When you add to this the internet, you have a large transfer of ideas, very similar to the anarchists, and these ideas can travel at a much faster rate. People on the far right do also travel, hold conferences and so on.

UG: OK. Now what about specifically Russian forms of xenophobia?

PN: Well, within Russia specifically you always had a fear of different encroachments, whether it's from the West or the East. Let's not forget that Peter the Great and his court spoke French, they didn't speak Russian. And when he moved from Moscow to St Petersburg he really looked to the West – and that was not a popular sentiment at the time, and still isn't. This sentiment goes the opposite way as well: many people in the West have a fear of the "great Russian hordes."

And then there's what some people would call the "inbred" anti-Semitism of Russia and Eastern Europe. I mean, you have to remember that the Protocols of the Elders of Zion were first printed in Russia, and that in Poland there were pogroms in 1946-47! So this is more endemic than something taken over from the Nazi policies or, earlier on, the "scientific" racism going back to Gobineau and so on. It was something that was always there, and it was used in the old Soviet Union in various times. And specifically in the Soviet Union this was bounded up with the opposition to Zionism, where you had the "Jewish Section" back in the '20s and then Stalin setting up his own Jewish autonomous regions. So they portrayed Zionism as imperialism while pandering to anti-colonial national liberation struggles, and this created the conception that Jews were suspect of a double political allegiance.

Then there's the fear of the East – the Mongol hordes, the Yellow Peril, which again doesn't come from nowhere. Since the Mongolian invasions of the middle ages, these have been important historical bogey-men. In Russian prison tattoos, it's fairly common for them to say "No Yids" and "No Mongols". The same goes for the fear of Islam, which also goes back in historical memory as far as the Ottoman takeover of Constantinople. So you have the

decadent West, anti-Semitism, the Islamic threat and the yellow peril.

Plus you have all these groups being played off each other in the Soviet Union in ethnic situations. So the Crimean Tartars, who are Islamic, Christian and Buddhist even though they're from the Ukraine, were shipped off to Siberia after the war. After the fall of the old Soviet Union they could go back to the Ukraine, and now there's a xenophobic reaction to them there among the white Russians and Ukrainians. And now the central Asian republics are also thought of as where the horrible gangsterism comes from, like "it's not from us Russians per se", or "it's the Jews" or whatever.

UG: And political ultra-nationalists were also very active in some of these countries in the 20s and 30s.

PN: Right. So just to put it into historical perspective so you understand, when the Germans took over the Baltics in 1941, many people there saw the Nazis or the German army as liberators, and then of course because of Hitler's policies and his racial ideas they were considered sub-human too. Or, for example, you had Dmytro Dontsov and the far-right Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, who were active throughout the war, with a military wing as well, and remained influential later.

Also at this point in Harbin, which is today in China, you had lots of white Russian exile fascist groups and, by the way, a large Jewish population as well, many of whom were allied with Jabotinsky's right-wing Zionist Revisionist organization. Harbin was the largest city in Manchukuo, the Japanese puppet state, and the far-right Russian exiles there happily collaborated with the Japanese fascists. And during '39 when the Japanese were testing the border between Manchuria and the Soviets in Mongolia, in one of those minor precursors to WW2, within the Japanese forces you also had white Russian troops. Also, during 1938-1940, there were battles between the Soviets and Japanese on the Mongolian plains, the Soviet-Japanese Border War, won by Soviet Gen. Gregory Zhukov.

Most people also don't realize there were still pitched battles in what we now call the Soviet Union during the post-war period, so you had this in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, and to give you an idea of the ideologies involved, let's not forget many of the concentration camp guards had been Latvians. There were running battles, major battles between the Soviet army and partisans up until 1954, so you have almost 10 years of civil war there

after World War II. And you have civil war in the Ukraine on and off from as far back as 1917 with Makhno and up until the mid-50s. So they had a very tenuous border here.

UG: Sounds pretty mixed politically.

PN: Well, the fighters were of a wide political spectrum - Catholic democrats, left socialists, but right-wing people as well. And especially in the case of the Baltics, remember they had a civil war in 1919-1920 to get national status. So you have a myth of this great war of independence but that was always a part of it.

UG: So there's obviously a strong military ethos underlying all this...

PN: Definitely - for example The NBP has a paper called Limonka, which means little lemon, which is a name that the Russian soldiers who went to Afghanistan called their grenades. And in the '70s and '80s you had a disgruntled population who fought that war, which was Russia's Vietnam, so you had a lot of people who wanted at this point to save the face of mother Russia, and those people were also sympathetic to a more conservative nationalist orientation. And some of them were also involved in drug smuggling at the time, which is a sort of the link between the gangster side and the far right.

And more generally some of these people have spent some serious time in the Zone. The Zone is a unique Russian thing that goes back to the old Soviet period. The Zone includes the prisons, the gulags, the orphanages, mental hospitals, but importantly the military in general is also part of the Zone, and that's another place where some of these ideas and some of the criminality was involved, plus the Soviet Union and Russia today has very strict laws against what we'd call hooliganism, in fact you could get tried and convicted as a hooligan and end up in the Zone.

UG: Can you explain more about that?

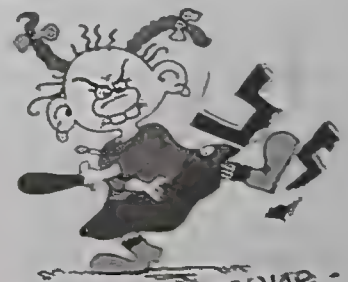
PN: The term "hooliganism" covered a wide variety of offenses in the Soviet Union, from vagrancy to gang activity. It was also used against political dissidents. When guys were charged with hooliganism they entered the Zone, and in the Zone they would encounter right-wing political ideas and imagery.

For example, if you look at old prison tattoos, Nazi imagery was popular and mixed with old communist imagery. However, it was more thought of as anti-social vs. what we would consider as more politically Nazi. When someone goes into the prison system, somebody

who doesn't have a tattoo isn't thought of as a man and isn't thought of as a human being. So you start to get your tattoos and your tattoos are like your own autobiography. So I can suss you out immediately because I can look at your tattoos and see who you are. Now one of the popular tattoos for someone who was "a-social", i.e. someone you don't want to fuck with and somebody who's not gonna fuck with you if you don't fuck with them, was a swastika. And the term they used in the prison would have been anti-social or anarchist - they also used the anarchist symbol, but the "circle A" anarchist symbol wasn't around until 1964.

There's a level of duplication: because of the weather and whatever, many people would duplicate their life history in different tattoos on their hands, and then have other tattoos on the rest of their body. So one of the symbols they used for what's known as a "ring tattoo" was a swastika. But what's important to remember is that in '45 at one point you would have had maybe three or four million German prisoners of war, soldiers, who were in the gulag system for years. So during the 40s you had a lot of German soldiers around in the gulags who had Nazi tattoos - not just the SS tattoos but it might be, like, "Love Margarethe" with a big swastika or something.

Equally, it's important to understand that the old gulag was actually one of the freest places for political debate. I mean, once you got stuck in there, there were maybe twenty different Trotskyist groups around and they'd just have their political arguments in the open because, like, nobody was going anywhere! And the guards didn't give a shit. So ironically, the place with the largest freedom of speech in the old Soviet Union was the gulags. In fact, they had vast political libraries. I mean, it was traditional that when you left the gulags, you left your books. So you had this marketplace of ideas in the gulag. Now who's also in the gulag in the 40s and 50s? Nazi soldiers! And being a product of a Third Reich education I'm assuming they may have had some influences there.



СПРОТИВЛЕНИЕ
НАШ ВЫБОР

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3rd Gay Parade in Romania

Anti-Fascist News

The first Gay Parade in Romania took place in May 2005. Since the beginning, extreme right groups have violently attacked and tried to stop any kind of event related to LGBTQ, but especially the March for Diversity.

This year the third edition of Gay Parade happened and we expected to face the same violent actions from Noua Dreapta (New Right - the most important right wing organization) and the Christian Forum.

LoveKills Collective, Initiativa Autonoma CAF, Initiativa Libertara and other antifa and anarcho-punk groups from Ploiesti, Brasov, Bucuresti and Timisoara organized an action against Noua Dreapta and their March for Normality (which they are doing every year in the same day as the Gay Parade). It may seem a lot of groups but here, in Romania, our groups are made out of 2 to 6/7 people, so in the end we were about 30 people who tried to stop or at least disturb the fascist demonstration. When we were heading for the demonstration our street patrol identified a group of people wearing t-shirts with nationalist message and holding a banner of the conservative movement/party which had a homophobic message: "Homosexuals from everywhere leave us alone!" the banner was easily taken away from them and immediately destroyed.

The fascist demonstration gathered about 3-400 people (they have declared themselves 800-1000), most of them were neo-nazis, and others were theology students, priests and christian people belonging to the Orthodox Church - what we like to call Christian-orthodox religious fundamentalists. They were holding banners and flags with fascist symbols like the Celtic cross (the logo of Noua Dreapta) or portraits of legionnaires, as well as icons and shouting "Romania is not Sodoma" "We don't want to be a nation of faggots". We intended to attack frontally and stop the march of "Normality", but we didn't expect so many policemen. It was impossible to get in front of the march so we came from aside showing a banner with "All different, all equal", we shouted towards them "Noua dreapta is fascist", "No to fascists, no to nazis! Here we are antifascists". We shouted for 10 minutes and managed to capture all the attention of the media, which we consider a good aspect, since the fascist demonstration was completely ignored for the next half of the day. But in the same time we pro-

voked the brutal intervention of the police. The intervention was delayed because of the massive presence of the media, if it wasn't for this we wouldn't have had the chance to scream and speak out our ideas for 10 minutes, but only for 2 minutes



maybe... after these 10 minutes we tried to leave the place peacefully but under the constant threat of the police who was continuously shouting at us to leave. One hundred meters away, walking on a secondary street, the police violently intervened, we run as much as we could but 14 of us got



arrested and brought to the police station, for identification and interrogation. The other 16 managed to run and escape. One of them got beaten by a police officer and ended up with an open wound at the head. Pictures and fingerprints were abusively taken even with the disapproval of some of us. The democratic state of Romania



forbids the demonstrations against fascist manifestations, which theoretically are forbidden by the same laws of the same democratic state of Romania. The fines that 11 of us got are the equivalent of 11 average salaries/month, so the total is of 1720

euros. The other 3 people are from Germany, U.S.A. and republic of Moldova, so they only got a warning since they are not citizens of Romania.

Later in the afternoon, after we got out of the police station, some of us went to support the gay parade which was attacked by hundreds of hooligans and members of extreme right wing groups. They were throwing rocks and gas bombs, trash from the bins and even the people who were living in the blocks aside were throwing eggs and tomatoes against the people in the gay parade. One hundred hooligans and Noua Dreapta members got arrested.

As always the media's aims were to misinform and manipulate the public opinion. The images shown on TV were presented in a way that our initiative was mistaken for the fascist attacks against the gay parade. For example they were showing images of us being arrested but talking about the violence against the gay parade, or showing images of hooligans throwing gas bombs towards the gay parade and talking about the "dangerous anarchists who tried to violently attack the people who were peacefully marching to defend the healthy orthodox values of family, against this horrible disease, called homosexuality". They have presented the march for "Normality" as a politically correct manifestation, harmlessly trying to protect the values of the Romanian traditional (-orthodox) family, having no connection with fascist ideology or discrimination and violence.

The LGBTQ community has denied any connection with us but declared that they agree and support our action. We were even congratulated by 2 German guys who came to support the gay parade...

All in all considering our actions from the past years, in which concerns Gay Parade, which mainly consisted of spreading leaflets, talking to people in the street and tearing up Noua Dreapta's posters, this year we have managed to do our first direct action of civil disobedience. We consider this action a victory and a good example; we hope that it will give more confidence to those who are afraid of going out there in the streets and fight fascism, also police abuse and we hope that next time more people will join us, so that our actions can have more impact.

Antifa Romania

ANARCHIST BLACK CROSS

Anti-Fascist Pasha Needs Financial Help

In beginning of October Pasha, anti-fascist activist and straight-edger, was jumped at and beaten with baseball bats by persons unknown in Vladivostok. Now half of his face is totally paralyzed, and in less than two weeks a very expensive neurosurgical operation has to be made, something he can not afford on his own.

We do not know if this attack has to do with his politics - Pasha could not recognize his attackers, they were all masked and dressed in sports suits. It is well possible, that the attackers were just local gang bangers ("gopniks"). On the other hand, these days few Nazis go around in bonehead uniform.

However Pasha is a good comrade and needs our help. You may pass money through the following accounts in web-money

R430836968859
Z187178934821
E631624966819

In case you do not like to use these but are interested to help, please write to Moscow group of Anarchist Black Cross abc.rus@gmail.com for other means.

Write to Anarchist Class Struggle Prisoner Pavel Delidon!

Pavel Delidon is an anarchist, anti-fascist and animal rights activist from Stariy Oskol, South-West of Russia. Last July he was given a 5 year sentence for an attempt to collect wages his former boss had no intention to pay. You may read more background of the story on www.avtonom.org/index.php?nid=1032

Actually, "Armed robbery by illegal trespassing" (statute 162 paragraph 3 of Russian criminal codex - Pavel had a pepper spray with him) carries a minimal sentence of 7 years, judge was very lenient considering the positive role of Pavel in his community. On the other hand, the local court has refused to open a criminal case against his boss for wage arrears, a decision which is currently being appealed with a good prospect of a

success. If a case against his boss is opened, Pasha's crime may be reconsidered as "vigilantism", which carries a much lesser sentence - from probation to five years.

For sure, the defence campaign for Pavel is not only relying on legal means - during appeal court last July people from Voronezh, Moscow and Stariy Oskol travelled to Belgorod to make a picket, something which made local FSB to freak out, but although there was huge pressure, they made no arrests.

Last month, Pavel was finally taken from remand prison to the prison camp - please write letters of support! Pavel is studying English in prison, so any letters and journals in English are highly appreciated by him!

Pavel Delidon
ul. Timiryazeva-1
FGU IK-7
309990 Valuyki
Russia

It should make it there even if address is written with Latin letters, but even better if you may write address with Cyrillic.

Support Imprisoned Belarussian Anti-Fascists!

Maksim and Vladislav are anti-fascists from Minsk, who are doing 3 years sentences in Belarussian camps for their activities. They sup-

port football club MTZ-RIPO, which is famous for its uncompromisingly anti-fascist fans.

Maksim turned 18 years old in late July. He has been in the anti-fascist movement for 3 years, and was one of the organisers of Food Not Bombs in Minsk, which made actions in Gorki park, Victory square and other places in the city.

In December of 2006 they had an encounter with nazis, who ended up being defeated. One of the nazis figured out that Maksim was participating in the event, and he went for the

cops. Eventually Maksim and Vladislav were sentenced to 3 years for "aggravated hooliganism", that is statue 339 part 2 of the Belarussian criminal codex.

Write letters of support to Maksim and Vladislav! Their addresses are

Gubski Maxim
VK-2 - 21
Batova str. 4 Bobruisk
213800
Belarus

Vladislav Vladimirovich Plyashkevich
IK-10 otryad 4
Novopoltsk-5 Vitebskaya oblast
211440
Belarus

If you have a chance to write addresses with cyrillic letters, chances are better that your letter will make it there.

Addresses with Cyrillic Letters

Pavel

309990 Валу́йки
ул. Тимирязева-1,
ФГУ ИК-7
Делидону Павлу
Russia

Maksim and Vladislav

213800 Республика Беларусь г.Бобруйск
ул. Батова-4 ВК-2
отд. 21
Губскому Максиму.

Пляшкевич Владислав Владимирович
211440. Республика Беларусь. Витебская обл.
г.Новополоцк-5 ИК-10. Отряд №4.

ANARCHIST BLACK CROSS

"The main thing we want to achieve is to have a portal where anarchists look like intelligent, socially active, ethical and socially committed people and where these ideas can come through - both by showing anarchist ideas in theory and practice and by chipping away at the other shit - the state, the capitalist myth, discrimination..."

CIA and the Anarchist Movement in Poland

Interview with an Anarchist from the Anarchist Information Portal

CIA stands for Centrum Informacji Anarchistycznej - Anarchist Information Center. Well, we are sorry if many of you are disappointed at this point. "So, it is not as sensational as I thought", you might think. We understand, we, (or actually our comrades from Poland), confused you for a while by using such well known name. Since over a year CIA has become one of the most progressive and important anarchist projects of the decade in Poland. Since very beginning of its existence, AbolishingBB, was also using it as a reliable and diverse source of information. The time came to introduce the project and the idea behind it to the wider spectrum of anarchists around the globe. For this reason, we have prepared this interview, which offers some interesting information on the presence and problems of anarchists in Poland today - *AbolishingBB*

CENTRUM INFORMACJI ANARCHISTYCZNEJ



BOJKOTUJ WYBORY

**DEMOKRACJA BEZPOŚREDNIA - TAK!
DEMOKRACJA PRZEDSTAWICIELSKA - NIE!**

ABB: Could you describe what CIA is about? how it works? On what principles it works? and What are the goals of such a project?

CIA is a portal run by a collective of anarchists. One of the goals is to promote a certain set of values and ideas - anarchism, anti-capitalism, anti-discrimination, self-organization etc. In this way, it is similar to many anarchist portals around the world. We publish news, not only about the anarchist and grassroots movements, but which also shed light on the nature of the state, of capitalism, discrimination and oppression. Besides news, there are lots of articles on a wide range of topics, some blogs, listings of events and films, and PDF files.

ABB: We would like to avoid some technical questions here, but, in case activists from elsewhere are interested in starting a similar project; how many hours of work daily/weekly does it take to keep CIA so well updated and running on such a professional level?

The most work was required at the beginning because, at first you have to attract readers. The collective had to produce almost all the content themselves at first to get people to start visiting the site. Now, it's easy because

readers send in lots of stuff, so the amount of time collective members spend on creating content depends on them. You have to check the submissions line regularly though, (the service is moderated), and unfortunately, deal with commercial spam and some technical glitches, but there are enough people in the collective so that it's not too time consuming for any one person. In order to make sure there is fresh stuff everyday, the collective should probably spend at least an hour a day creating content, but again, this depends. Some days readers are more active than others. Also, the editors are interested in publishing certain stories, so they may choose to spend a lot of time writing or translating an article or doing a newswire. Sometimes when there were special events happening, like the G8, people spent a lot of time making updates and some individuals could spend 5-6 hours a day working. What you can say is that in general, the more time people spend on a project, the better it can be, so, on the days when people have time, and different collective members are able to put in an hour or two, we usually have a few nice solid stories or articles.

ABB: For more than 5 years, Polish Indymedia exists—similar to other regions, the anarchists have been

active there too. Why did you decide to make centre specifically oriented towards anarchist information? What problems do you see with the Indymedia concept as it is and what are the specific problems you face in Poland?

This question actually should be a little strange to readers outside of Poland because in almost every place in the world, anarchist portals exist and Indymedia exists, side by side, different projects. So, are you asking why people in Poland decided to do normally like other anarchists?

Why does anybody make an anarchist portal? Same reasons.

In reality, before there was the Indymedia project, there was an anarchist project, a portal called Po Prostu which was on a pretty good level. People liked it. But then when the Indymedia idea came, so did an ideology that was telling anarchists that anarchist-specific projects are ghettoized, so the Po Prostu idea was somehow inferior to the idea of Indymedia that is open to everybody. Very soon, Po Prostu went under and some other attempts at making portals didn't go very well. This kind of thing probably happens, but it's strange that people should see only enough room for one kind of project. As it turned out, it's not true - people use CIA and Indymedia, although

some individuals may have a preference for one or the other.

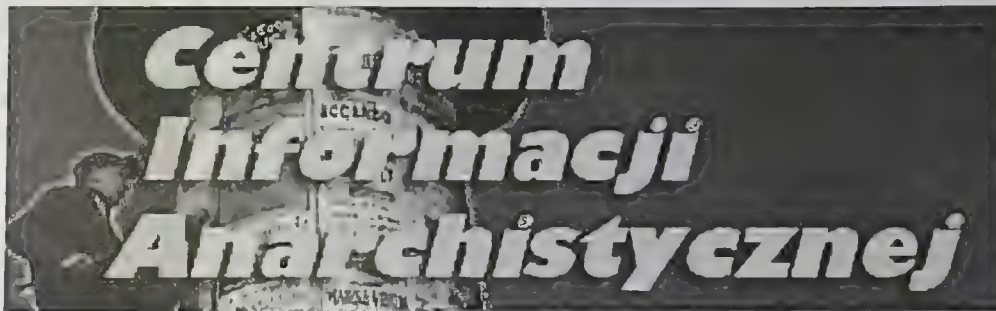
I don't think anybody in the CIA collective would see any problem with the Indymedia concept per say. In fact, there is an ex-Indymedia person and two current IMC people in the CIA collective. But one has to take into account that the quality of an IMC depends on the collective and also on the society it finds itself in. In Poland there is a dominance of right-wing conservative people and there are few grassroots movements. The left is dominated by parties. This influences the look of the content on IMC. In such a situation, if conservatives or silly people get active on the service, you only have a choice of removing their posts or being active and creating more content than they, so that the final result looks like something you'd like. The IMC gets more trash than CIA because the

right-wingers test your tolerance through the comments. We never got any articles written by parties, anti-semites, third positionists or those type of people, because they know not to bother sending them. That means that a small portion of comments don't get put on, because as soon as you do something like publish something on abortion, you get tons of abusive misogynistic rants, even by people we know. At IMC, it's different. Some people consider that to be authoritarian, but people abuse the internet often and soon you can get overrun by right-wingers who invade our site if you aren't careful. Different people in the CIA collective feel somewhat differently on the issue in terms of the level of strictness and some people prefer to print stupid stuff but engage the writer in some dialog. That can require a lot of time because sometimes people get involved and write 5-6 mails under one article. It's not uncommon to get 30-50 comments going on controversial topics.

ABB: What kind of news and stories are the most common on the CIA? What social issues are more present and which ones are less present? and Why do you think that is?

That's a good question. We have a "category" function. Local or international news which is not further cate-

gorized obviously is most common, but after that, is the category "protests". All kinds of protests. Then comes "workers' rights". That could be about strikes, the labour code, discrimination, workplace struggles. Then comes "anarchist movement". All sorts of things that anarchists do. Articles are next - again on a wide variety of topics. Sometimes commentary on news, sometimes social problems, philosophy, economy, anarchist articles including classics. Next, unfortunately, comes a category called "repression". That's a wide category, but it relates to state repression, not only against anarchists. Next, we have a category called "that's how politicians are". That's where



people write about corruption scandals mostly, or how politicians are idiots. Other popular categories include "racism and nationalism", "ecology", "militarism" and "education and children's rights". "Womens' rights" is not the smallest category, but could be better; there are only slightly over 100 posts on this topic.

The amount of posts reflects a wide variety of things, including the interests of the people who write them and what's going on. "Education and children's rights" became popular when we got a fascistic Minister of Education and there were a lot of changes in the school and protests. "Ecology" was very popular when there was a big campaign about Rospuda Valley. After that, some ecologists started reading the service because we had very good coverage of those protests, and they send us a lot of material.

The fact that "women's rights" isn't very present is because it is a marginalized issue in Polish society and because anarcho-feminists tended towards separatism and some anarchists were rather sexist. Most of the posts on that topic are made by one or two people who are interested in the topic.

It's hard to rebalance some issues because deep down, some people feel that certain issues are more important than others. For example, even some people in the editorial collective think there's too much ecology

because they don't care too much personally about the issue. Recently there were 3 or 4 articles from vegans and people were complaining that it was "too much" and that people would think we're an animal liberation portal, even though there were less than a handful of news stories on this topic ever published on the portal, and the article on why to be a vegan was the first one. So you can say that people have their prejudices.

Ironically, there is a big gap between what people submit as content and what people actually want to read. Sometimes it's even embarrassing for us! The most popular news items tend to be about nazis. The most popular piece ever was about Simon Mol (a

refugee who had HIV and knowingly slept with some women). Thousands and thousand of people read it. But also one of the most popular pieces ever was about a

football player - it was just some accident. Because so many people, even the majority most time, come onto the portal through google or links on other services, sometimes there are "accidents" like that; something that's not a normal topic, but's more interesting to normal people than others. But we decided it's great because a lot of people wind up on CIA by accident. Maybe they'll read other stuff. There were over 155,000 hits just from google searches from Jan.-Aug. 2007 - that's almost 20,000 a month. We were all really surprised by this and are usually surprised by some of the things people are searching for. One thing we are proud of is that some people were complaining about cheating employers on CIA, and people thinking of working there come on and read about it. There's one company who can't get rid of the negative image made by cheated people complaining in comments on CIA. This is the first thing you find in the internet about the company.

But that's maybe more about accidental readers. We can see what gets read or not and unfortunately sometimes somebody sends something really good, but it's too hard for people to read, or the topic is not hot or "sexy" enough. There are lots of clicks on the "women's rights" category, but few updates. There are lots of stories about strikes and lots of info on the law that few people read.

ABB: What kind of statistics do you have about the numbers of people visiting the anarchist information portal in Poland?

We have statistics, although we had to delete back logs to make space on the server, so it's hard to say exactly. A few thousand a day. The high point was around 13 or 14 thousand a day but there was something like G8 going on at that time. When there is an important protest or event, more people go on. More people read the content then because some people subscribe and there are other sites that reprint the content or have feeds – for example Cuckarnia or Black Flag or GAS (Anarchist Group "Solidarity" – another anarchist group in Poland), have feeds and Free Media reprint a lot of our things. These are good statistics for us. We suspect anarchists or anarchist sympathizers to be around 1,500 in Poland, not everyone with a computer.

ABB: Do you have any information about the wider social relevance of CIA. For example, if the news/stories published on CIA are being followed by certain numbers of people outside of the movement or about the use of this content in other, (non-specifically anarchist), channels of information?

As mentioned above, some people find CIA by accident. Some people are looking for some info and they find it there – for example, about a certain protest. Sometimes we might be the only source of information on certain topics. Or, the most interesting or complete source of news. A lot of people read our reports about the G8 for example because there was different news there than in the mainstream media.

Some stories or articles on CIA are used widely by normal people because the quality of the news is sometimes better than the mainstream media. CIA became a source on some wikipedia pages because of this. Sometimes this is about weird topics.

Some things on CIA are too radical to have any impact or be published anywhere else in Poland – left sites included. It is true though, that some stories hopped from CIA to the mainstream media, although not always important ones. A couple of stories that were important went to the mainstream media later, with more factual details. Mainstream journalists are not allowed to take risks on certain topics. For example, we had a lead about League of Polish Family members involved in misappropriating

funds from a bank where they were on the supervisory board. There was not a lot of documentation about it we could find, but enough to print the story. The mainstream media is sometimes worried about getting sued or about getting into certain matters. That story appeared in the mainstream news months later and was a big scandal. Or, the story about a nazi picnic with some political connections. The mainstream media was trying to get as much info as they could and find out "everything we knew". Or, the very famous joke candidate Kononowicz, known by every Pole. Our friends knew his campaign was organized by a party founded by fascists and we were the first to expose it. After that, the media confirmed this and it was a big story. Those types of



stories don't have any social impact really – it only means that some people read us when there is a "scoop" but hopefully they read something more on the site.

One more thing – when we publish statements on CIA and if there is an anarchist action, the papers sometimes publish parts of these texts, which means usually a better article than if the journalists write everything themselves.

ABB: What kind of impact can a project like this have on the anarchist movement in Poland?

That's yet to be seen. The main thing we want to achieve is to have a portal where anarchists look like intelligent, socially active, ethical and socially committed people and where these ideas can come through – both by showing anarchist ideas in theory and practice and by chipping away at the

other shit – the state, the capitalist myth, discrimination, etc.

This is a long and slow process. If there will be an impact, we suppose we'll see what it is in about 5 years or so. Then we can see if these things are more popular or widespread ideas. Then we can see if anybody reading about activities of anarchists around the world found this inspiring enough to do things like that, or whether it had another effect.

Sometimes the immediate effect of things can be different than you want. For example, sometimes you can write about a demo somewhere and people react like "oh, how come those sort of things don't happen here". So instead of feeling like "yeah, we can do that too" somebody might feel frustrated and just wanna do some radical tourism.

Other times we know that some people like the selection of news, but others don't like the topics. Among collective members there are sometimes differences in opinion on things like style and humour. Some people want a more humorous portal, or one with more pictures of burning barricades and some people whince when they see a story like that because they want to project a different image of anarchists.

One thing we are confident about is that it will project a different image of anarchists and it will be more multifaceted. Sometimes people tell us that they were impressed by something and that it changed their view of anarchists.

But CIA is controversial amongst some people. Anarchocapitalists and people who are somewhat conservative hate the portal. On some issues there is no consensus in the general anarchist movement, so there are sometimes inter-anarchist disagreements going on online. Some people from the collective would prefer this to take place on the forum, some in the comments. It's hard to tell the impact of this – whether it is divisive, or whether it's building some unity.

We hope that the portal will inspire other anarchists to try to reach out to the public, to try to present better arguments to the public, to learn to write news pieces with convincing arguments. It's very hard to do but people can practice and we see that some people are doing well.

ABB: People are always curious about the "censorship" (text-content control) policy in context of such projects. What is your approach here?

As mentioned before, there is modera-

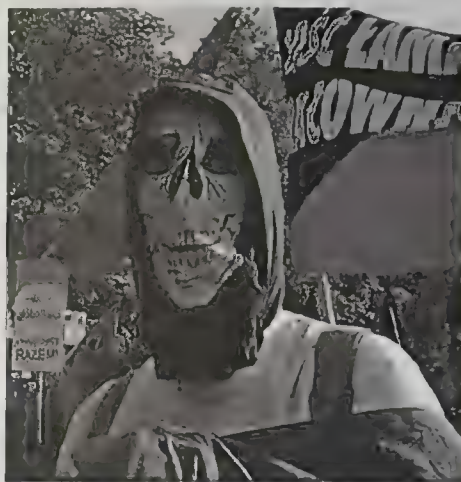
tion and different members of the collective feel differently about moderation of comments or what qualifies for it. (The moderation or non-publication of articles is so small that it is almost not an issue.) Anarchists tend to have different views towards it; some are not tolerant of it at all – but it's hard to appreciate the amount of spam and death threats neonazis can generate or the havoc vandals can make. This is a very hard issue and all portals that have any moderation at all inevitably have disagreements or questions about it, or complaints.

The main concern is not to allow the right wing and conservative agenda to be dominant or let things degenerate into flames, not to encourage anonymous provocations. I don't think anybody particularly likes doing it and some editors avoid some moderation choices and then sometimes discussions take place. Maybe the cliché of necessary evil is best to describe it.

Surely anarchists around the world could get into a good discussion of these types of issues. They can be looked at from different angles and handled in different ways. For example, what do you think happens when somebody writes, let's say, an article defending the right to abortion in Poland? There can be dozens of awful comments, calling the woman a "bitch", "killer", saying that person should be killed herself and the result could be that a person prefers to print in a magazine or on a site with no comments at all. It has to be repeated that sometimes these comments even come from "anarchists" or different activists. Once you decide not to allow something like that and to discuss the issue in a different way, the atmosphere changes and you create room for people to feel safer taking risks on topics like that. A woman might feel more support. Or anybody who is normally harassed by the mainstream society. We all know people who avoid publishing on some places because they can't stand the comments and we also know the editors of some portals hide the comments on other pages because they are embarrassed about them on the one hand, but don't want to start moderating on the other. But actually, once you make some positions clear, people who know the site begin to act differently and the abuse goes down.

The worst thing for us has been a handful of occasions when anarchists or, more often some leftists, have had to been "censored" due to getting out of control. A really rather small number of incidents get blown out of proportion. Readers of CIA might be surprised to know that most of the edito-

rial collective has been subject to "constructive criticism" leading to re-writes more strictly than normal readers. And that the most often censored person is akai47 who uses a lot of nasty language and posts lots of offensive and outrageous stuff about politicians, some of it criminal in Poland. Inside the collective it's easier because people talk to each other about things but readers who are somehow censored sometimes don't leave a contact to talk about it or just are automatically furious and want to argue even more. Luckily, the percentage of these cases is rather small and sometimes you go for days with-



out seeing anything at all that needs to be moderated. Usually those things come in waves, when a scandal or hot discussion is held, or when there are topics like abortion or the death penalty. BTW, we get letters often from politicians or bosses claiming they are innocent and workers are lying; we don't like to print them.

ABB: Recently CIA prepared a printed version of the content on the site. Is "Wyzwolenie" ("Liberation") a step towards a regular paper edition of CIA?

Not clear. There was talk about it for a long time and a number of small one-off zines were made based on its content. We think that there is enough good content for a paper edition, so we hope it will keep going. Papers involve more expense than internet and don't reach as many people, so probably, we'll have to see how much response there is to it.

ABB: In general, do you see a need for a wider and more professional, (in terms of substance and organization), anarchist publication in Poland?

Members of the collective have different views on this issue. Some mem-

bers of the collective work on publications, anarchist or leftist like the excellent "Recycling Idea". So, some people would say that maybe there just needs to be more anarchist articles there, or that maybe some other publication should just come out more regularly. But in general, people do feel a gap. There's a problem with writers in the anarchist movement. But maybe this situation is improving. We were pleasantly surprised to find an improvement in our articles section. A year or two ago, some leftist publishers were laughing at anarchists and implying that they aren't too literate. With some exceptions, there was a big gap between what they could produce and what we could produce. (They benefit from being able to draw from a broad left intellectual pool.) But this gap is closing. There's a leftist portal that has a lot of articles and some anarchists were envious of it but now the overall quality of CIA is better and it has more visitors. And some weeks the articles on CIA are even better than on that one, although not always – some are a little weak. Not everybody thinks this is an issue. Some anarchists are extremely anti-intellectual and get angry at certain types of articles which are too philosophical. Some former anarchist publications refused to print such stuff because they were considered "too hard". So what would probably be good is to have papers with different profiles. The word "professional" means nothing because some anarchist magazines looked very "professional" in terms of being glossy and well-designed but having trouble getting content. Also "professional" could imply "commercial" for some people and what sells is not always what you want to print.

ABB: Thank you for the interview and work you put into CIA. Would you like to add anything?

Yes. You might be surprised, but we get a lot of hits from abroad and our statistics show that lots of people are checking out the English news – but almost nobody sends regular news in English! We know that some people don't want to sign up and change to the English interface, even though they can do it, but we'd like to encourage people to send stuff if they are posting to sites around the world. We don't think there's enough English news to regularly attract foreigners to read the service because they use other ones, but people will read things you send. We also have a greatly underused "other language" category. We welcome people to use it..

This is another older report included in this issue. This came about in a longer break we have in publishing. As it happens the project described below does not exist any more. Its history was as fascinating as short. Yet, we still decided to present this material to you, as a sign of visible intensification of anarchist activities in Romania in the last period – visible on very different levels and expressed in different forms of actions. ABB

"LIBER Means FREE"

First Anarchist Squat in Romania

At the beginning of July 2007 a group of anarchists squatted an old "cinema" building in the city of Iasi, close to the ukrainian/mol-davian borders. This first Romanian squat is named "Rebil" as an anagram for "liber" meaning FREE in Romanian.

For years the building in the centre of Iasi has been abandoned. It belongs to the Ministry of Culture and Cults (means the orthodox and catholic churches), and at the same time under the maintenance of RADEF (Autonomous Society for Movie Distribution and Commercialization), both situated in Bucharest.

In 2007 the ministry announced a new law, which supports the selling out of the state cinema spaces to private businesses under the direction of using it for "some kind of art or cultural event". RADEF announced that under this law it will probably dissolve itself by the end of 2007.

At the time of the squat, people had information that there were two cases in court claiming the right to use the building. One, in court for 12 years, is between the ministry and the orthodox priest Merticarie, who claims that the building was originally build on the grounds of the church.

The second one, in court for 2 years, is between the ministry and an 80' year old man, Carol Theitler, living in Israel and claiming that the property belonged to his family, before the communist rule took it away.

During some Food Not Bombs actions the squatting group got in contact with some 'non-political squatters' (socially and economically excluded families squatting to have a roof over their heads) who had already had squat in a nearby building, since for a year and a half.

After entering the building the two different groups got together to paint and decorate the garden that unites both buildings. They also started to build a community and living space, a free shop with clothes, an info-shop as well as making the toilette usable again and building some electricity.

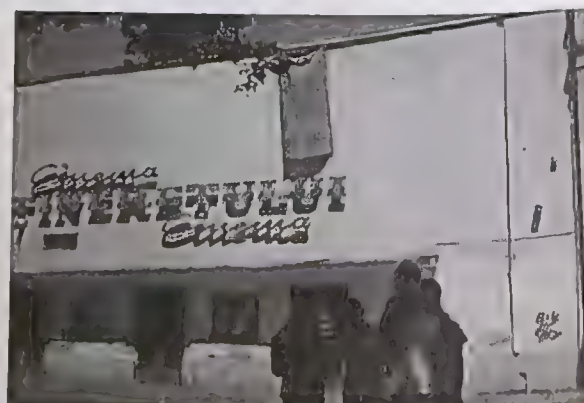
connection. The squatting group also started to make 24h shifts to guard the squat. After two days the administrators started to come and tried to make some pressure. Friday the 13th of July a representative from the ministry as well as the priest with his lawyer showed up and demanded the evacuation of the place by Monday the 16th. They intimidated and threatened some squatters if they would not stick to the deadline.

Until then there was no information regarding the actual standing of the court trials, but it seemed the priest was trying to get it through some special deals. The group started on the weekend with the blocking of the squat and building of barricades as a work in process for Monday. People also tried to gather legal information on the possibilities and difficulties of squatting in Romania. Then on Sunday the squatters got information from the legal side, that said that the court trial was over and the ownership has shifted from state to private, to the f***ing priest. This would mean being prey to the new law and also a much more serious court sentence. The squatters would have to face a minimum of 4 years in prison if arrested and put in trial for the squatting.

Different information, threats from the priest and ministry, a possible prison sentence as well as the lack of any past squatting activities to build on, leads to a state of insecurity among most squatters right now. But never the less, people do not want to give up. It is the first step in testing the grounds for future squats in Romania. It is also an important autonomous space for planning actions, as well as a free meeting space in the middle of town. For many of the squatters it is giving the building (which was not used for so long) and much more (the idea of making social change totally autonomous, without corporate money, hierarchical structures ...) back to the people in general.

In long and hard discussions it was decided to open the info/free-shop on Sunday, giving out clothes, making movie-projections in another room and the discussions with interested people lasted until late in the night. Throughout the day over 50-60 people came. A banner was painted to put over the freeshop "Magazin Liber" and a large banner with the slogan "you want money, we want freedom, for autonomous places everywhere" was prepared to hang down from the building at night, towards the street which is kind of a piazza with many people passing by everyday and directly opposite the church where the "new owner" resides. Ways into the building where barricaded till late in the night, and other ways prepared to get inside for the squatters, not easy to access by outsiders. Because of the impossibility to rely on former squatting experiences here, nobody knew how the police and the state would react. So it was decided to pull the banner, block everything, but stay outside of the house on Monday, the day of the deadline, to see how seriously they would react.

All day Monday the place was covered in secret police, the priest ran up and down, the administrators, the lawyers, all the drones in the hive trying to buzz the banner down. Until now they have not been able to get into the building. I still hear them trying to get through the blockades and furiously asking people, if they know where we went ... well, the game is on!!!!





Are We Ready for the NATO Summit?

A little portrait of Romania in the year 2007 so everyone can imagine how a mobilization against NATO-summit would look



In the 20's, left wing people were complaining that the situation could not get any worse. I doubt that the situation would have been singular. As a left-winger, you would have found out then that the peasants wanted land, political rights, popular banks, ruling of the law, far from the slightest trace of agrarian socialism.

The workers wanted insurances and a universal vote, but didn't want rights for the working women and were anti-Semite. The Jews wanted exclusive fiscal facilities.

In such a climate, any form of pure socialism was bound to fail, and at some point, when it was taken outside the law, the opportunists had to mingle either with the liberals or the conservatives.

At that point, because of these fights and of too many compromises, an anarchist movement was started by a group of intellectuals that taxed voting, election fight and the concessions made. This movement didn't last for long and references to it were erased from almost every historical account.

Another moment that's worth mentioning is the "communist" regime from before 1989. We can say that we've lived in a national-communist, authoritarian, retrograde and nationalist regime, one that is a lot closer to the national Bolshevik and the extreme right wing. What did we inherit? A segment of the population that assimilates "left" with the former regime; conservative people, that love discipline and authority, but have no real clue about social justice and as an electorate are very easy to be influenced by the extreme right. And another segment of the population

that hates the former regime and gives a negative connotation to the left wing.

So, if you were to state that you have some sort of affinity with the left, you risk getting tags like authoritarian, anti-democrat, anti-Christian, or to find new nationalist "friends" that praise in a very awkward way the former regime.

As for the superior scene of politics, it can be said that it's on the same level. We all know that the new politics transform the socialism of the 20th century into the liberalism of

the 19th century. The big social democratic parties are in a liberal area, and the small ones that pretend to be communist celebrate nationalist heroes or legionaries and as an example I give the NPD - concerning their tactics to collaborate with the syndicates.

The syndicates have become only a voice in the civil society and have lost a long time ago their "status" of pressure groups. And a great part of the ones that could be left wing people, active and initiative people are almost the same as in the 20's.

The small communities of Jews that are still living in Romania after the change of regime are in their majority neo-conservatives. A great part of the workmanship still has discriminative and sexist tendencies. Some Roma people hate the sexual minorities, and the organizations that promote the rights of sexual minorities come from a liberal zone and don't collaborate with other autonomous groups.

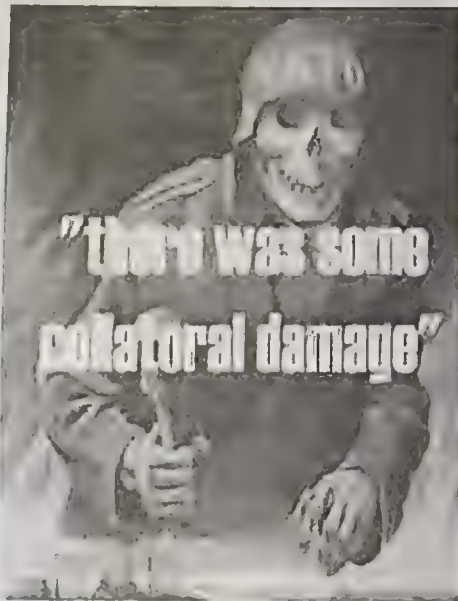
If we direct our attention to

the low area of the society we can observe the same problems, even some others that are out of the ordinary.

In the last years, there were actually 3 initiatives to form the Romanian Social Forum. Two of them were embezzled by people that had no relation with the Social Forums. The first was facilitated by liberal political people; officials, people of culture and people of the church were invited to it. Another group of initiative of FSR arose, but soon transformed into a small and closed group because of so many incidents and because of the fear of embezzlement by the secret services, taking into consideration that the first initiator of the "Romanian Social ATTAC" also appeared, but very soon disappeared in the fog.

The anarchist/autonomous scene is extremely small. The anarchism being known through anarcho punk bands, continued to be promoted through music, even though after a few years the scene wasn't big at all, and was still full of people and stereotypes of many kinds, unlimited violence, etc. Although small, that doesn't mean that there aren't conflicts between the few groups and people.

This is kind of the portrait of Romania in the year 2007. And starting from here, everyone can imagine how a mobilization against NATO-summit would look. We can even imagine how people react to such a topic, surely better than 10-20 years ago when many of the ones over 50 still lived in a semi-myth of awaiting the Americans.



Polish 'Dogs of War' to Stay in Iraq Cry 'Havoc!', and Let Slip the Dogs of War

Anti-Militarism

What do the State, Aliens and Tom Cruise have in common?

The State tends to be a bit like an alien spaceship - the more you attack it, the stronger its will and the more steadfast it becomes in pursuit of its nemesis. Advocates of 'propaganda by deed' tactics discovered this over 100 years ago. Nowadays, we can see fictitious 'apocalyptic battles' between the 'goodies' and 'baddies' taking place in big budget Hollywood movies, from *Star Trek* to *Independence Day* or *the War of the Worlds*. And of course, those with the most gel in their hair and brownest tan usually win the fight to save humankind from nasty looking sub, meta, or non-humans. William Shatner, Will Smith, Tom Cruise, and ah, the Kaczynski twins, to name but a few. So how can we solve the question posed above? Answer: their strengths are superficial, while their weaknesses - once identified, can be successfully exploited.

But jokes aside, all these foreign omnipotent objects of violent freedom-haters tend to have an Achilles' heel. And super heroes like Kirk, Dr. Spock, Captain Steven Hiller, Ray Ferrier, Jaroslaw and Lech usually end up developing MacGyver-like innovative equivalents of a weapon sharp enough to pierce the evil terrorist space saucers' weakest points, consequently bringing them crashing down into the abyss of oblivion. And hence, happy days for us civilised people, and tough luck for them death-loving lefty alien terrorist swines!

Ok, enough of that shite and more to the point.

Polish establishment unite after attack in Baghdad

The Polish gut, have been joined by their arch nemesis in the media, leading liberal-ish daily, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, in calls for calm and resolve in the aftermath of the attack on the Polish ambassador, Polish General Edward Pietrzyk, and his convoy in Baghdad.

All indications prior to this event, in which 2 people were killed, including one Polish security guard and over 14 others injured, were that the Polish

presence in Iraq would be extended indefinitely.

This was also surely an important demand from the U.S. in their recent 4th round of negotiations with Poland on the planned U.S. Anti-Ballistic Missile Defence system, which will probably be constructed in northern Poland by 2012. The roadside bomb on the Polish convoy has hardened the faulty commitment of the current Polish administration to continue their collaboration with the U.S. in



Iraq. And even if the Civic Platform opposition come to power with the help of the pseudo Leftist Alliance in the forthcoming elections, little if anything will change.

According to the Prime Minister, Jaroslaw Kaczynski: 'Desertion is always the worst option. It's a solution which doesn't bring anything positive, not to mention the moral side. Any embassy in Iraq could be attacked.'

Why is desertion always the worst option? It most certainly wasn't in Vietnam. And though Poland was part of an illegal invasion force that was post-hoc legitimised by the U.N., the disingenuous assertion by the Prime Minister that Poland is there for 'moral' purposes is quite frankly sickening not to mention being complete bullshit smothered with a gallon of cynicism.

So why the fuck is Poland in Iraq?

The reasons for their warmongering and sycophancy were and remain numerous - reassertion of strong political alliance with Washington D.C. while enjoying the fruits of an alliance with Brussels (In Ireland we say 'Dublin is closer to Boston than Brussels'); hope for lucrative financial benefits through attracting big multinational investments; desire to have their armed forces off their arses and doing something dangerously worthless.

And then of course there are the comments made by previous Prime Minister Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz in 2006, which give blunt insight into some of the prominent reasoning: 'Orlen (State oil company) should have oil deposits. And it will have them'

Asked if that would include Iraqi deposits and if that could happen this year, he remarked, respectively: 'For sure as well'

and 'Possibly'. And despite the fact that 27 Poles have now perished in the Iraqi quagmire, while Polish soldiers have been responsible for countless deaths there - all in the name of an immoral and illegal invasion - the Law and Justice party, that purports to embody Catholic social dogma in its political philosophy, continue to

pronounce their intention in Iraq 'moral'. Benedict XVI, will ya get up off your red slippers and forbid these fellows from communion on Sundays and leave the poor innocent homosexuals alone.

Big boys and their war toys

Lest we forget, war is big business. The appointment of a former general as Polish ambassador

6 months ago was undoubtedly well thought out. Poland is desperate to expand its business interests in Iraq,

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NASTĘPNY?

and who better to see arms deals negotiated successfully than a general. As the Iraq News Monitor reported in May of this year: *Iraq needs weapons quickly. Once the [Iraq] government decides it wants something, it wants it right away*, says Mr. Skowron (Polish State owned Bumar Arms company chief executive), who was in Iraq with Mr Szczygło (Polish Minister of Defence) earlier this year.

Bumar have already sold approximately \$400m worth of weapons and equipment to Iraq in 2003. They have also signed contracts to train Iraqi Special Forces

The Iraq News Monitor continues: *'Warsaw has been disappointed with Iraqi contracts, a sore point because Poland was one of only four countries to take part in the initial invasion in 2003, and continues to maintain a military presence there despite widespread opposition in Poland.'* Euphemisms for the 58 year old Polish General strategically turned envoy, Edward Pietrzyk, as Polish 'ambassador' and 'diplomat' are useful terms to hook the media into misleading the public from the truth and blindly leading Poles (who are against their country's presence in Iraq - 81% in recent polls, that is, but unfortunately this has had little impact on policy makers) into thinking their moral mission must not be 'deserted'.....

Mercenaries, no more - no less!

Think Christopher Walken in the infamous film 'Dogs of War.' Walken plays mercenary James Shannon who is captured and tortured while on a reconnaissance job to the African nation of Zangora. He returns soon after to lead a revolution and put in place a dictator sympathetic to a British multinational.

Think Maggie Thatcher's mercenary son Mark and his dog of war SAS comrades in their failed attempt to stage a coup d'état almost years ago in Equatorial Guinea to rob that country's oil resources. It is a country

which, as the British Guardian newspaper reported after the coup-plot was exposed, is oil rich, dirt poor. Neither the dogs of war nor the current dicta-

tor of Equatorial Guinea, Teodoro Obiang Nguema, who has been in power for 25 years, have the interest of ordinary people in their hearts or heads.

Think the notorious private security firm Blackwater which is currently been investigated by the FBI for random shootings of Iraqi civilians.....and try not to puke.

Think Edward Pietrzyk, his security guards and political masters.

All the above mentioned actors (apart from the Hollywood stars, of course) have one thing in common, 'Dogs of War'.

Is there any legitimate resistance in Iraq?

And despite my perspective of what they truly are in this drama, my heart goes out to the families of the deceased security guard and the Iraqi victim, and to all those injured in this attack.



Nevertheless, wind back 60 years to Warsaw, 1947. Were the occupying forces then a legitimate target in the eyes of the Home Army? If yes, it's hard to evade the logical conclusion that even though the historical circumstances are entirely different now, those who fought oppression and occupation in 20th century Poland are not all that different to the Iraqi resistance we don't receive much clarity about today. The resistance is

boxed off as 'terrorist' - period. But it just ain't that black and white ye all. It's not a case of, 'you're either with us or without us.'

The ones who don't kill little kiddies for breakfast, dinner and supper but target specific military, mercenary targets are the nationalist resistance. The other lunatics, well they're just wired to the moon!

We don't hear much of the legitimate resistance (permissible under International Law) because the lines are so blurred - the amount of paramilitary groups who only target occupation forces are vast compared to the terrorist groups that would even blow up your ham sandwich if they had a mini-second to plant a bomb in the butter!

And the fact that most media outlets don't stress that the differences between the various anti-occupation factions in Iraq are as extreme as those between Legia Warsaw and Wisła Kraków (two most prestige football teams in Poland) is testimony to the fact that we continue to view the situation in Iraq as black and white - just like Kaczynski, Bush, Brown, the European Commission, etc.

Epilogue

And just in case you thought all was doom and gloom from Iraq, think again. A little bit of good news came yesterday. Congress in the U.S. have voted that private security contractors can be legitimately held responsible in the U.S. for their misdeeds in Iraq and beyond. Associated Press report: *'The Democratic-led House of Representatives voted 389 to 30 in favor of expanding the US Military Extraterritorial Jurisdiction Act, to make all security contractors in conflict zones subject to action in US courts.'*

About fucking time Senators!

So don't forget to harass your local politician about the war whether he/she comes to your doorstep or if you meet him on the street in the lead up to the elections. They deserve it for not having the principle to resign from parliament 4 years ago, when the corrupt and morally redundant SLD kissed Bush's ass in 2003 by sending 2,500 soldiers to invade and occupy Iraq.

Source: Info portal "Centrum Informacji Anarchistycznej"

Anti-Militarism

Update on Introduction of US-Missile-Defence-Systems in Eastern Europe

The American military has been planning the installation of new missile defence systems in Europe. The purpose of the system is ostensibly to intercept missile attacks "aimed at the US" from locations outside the US. The system is made up of several elements: Ground Based Interceptors (which aren't totally effective in intercepting anything). Battle Management, Command, Control, and Communications Centers, X-Band and Early Warning Radars and satellites, and a Space-Based Infrared System.

Several Eastern European countries will participate in some way in this system, most notably Poland and the Czech Republic where American bases will be built to house elements of the system. Missiles most likely will

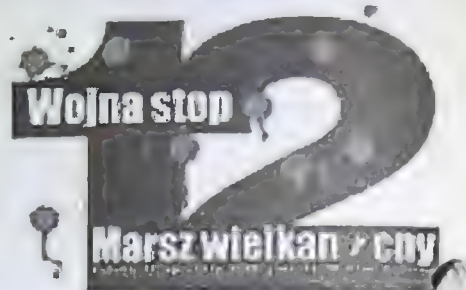
be stored in Poland while a radar base built in the Czech Republic.

There is considerable public opposition to the building of these bases in both countries. In the Czech Republic there seems to have been more leftist and anarchist protests, along with protests of local residents from near the proposed sight. In Poland there is also such protest but on a lower level. Several political parties have made the bases an election campaign issue. Regardless of the level of protest, there is wide-scale public opposition to the prospect.

Anarchists are planning some international mobilizations against the bases: more information will be sent to ABB-journal when plans are finalized. It is likely that an international protest at the proposed site of the

base, just outside city of Slupsk, along with some other events, will take place in Poland some time in the early spring, probably in March or April.

People interested in obtaining more information can write to:
tarcza@bzzz.net



Propaganda Materials of Campaign Against US Military Bases in Poland

The US is a country that has the largest number of military quarters abroad. Regarding their structure and legal status, more than 725 American military quarters are not colonies, but they remain beyond any legal jurisdiction and control of the countries in which they are stationed.

After 1989 we got rid of the huge Soviet military bases which had not only been a problem of a political, but also of social and economic nature. Recently, the press has revealed an unofficial information concerning plans to build an American military base in Poland.

Do you know that:

- according to the unofficial information, beginning with 2006, a quarter of one of the American squadrons (16

aircrafts) which may be withdrawn from Germany is supposed to be located in Krzesiny (municipality in the vicinity of Poznań, currently stationed by the Polish III squadron of tactical air force).

The municipalities of Powiśle and Pask are also being taken into consideration, as well as the military ranges in Drawsko, Wądrzyn and Wiczków Pomorskie;

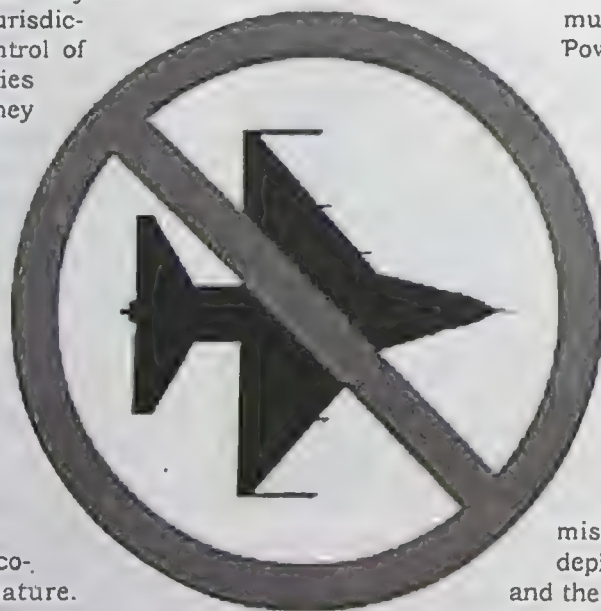
- During their rifle drills, the American military forces use

missiles with depleted uranium, and the fuel discharged by the planes before

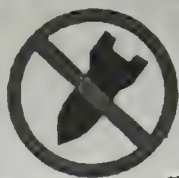
emergency landing pollutes air and contaminates water, thus causing leukaemia and breast cancer. In those places, near which the military bases are located, occurrence of cancer increases, e.g. in a small town of Tuscon, in the USA, 63 women out of 5.000 die of this disease each year.

This problem occurred as early as 10 years after the military air forces had been located there. For comparison, in the Wielkopolska region in Poland the occurrence of breast cancer amounts to about 43 per 100.000 women!

- The volume of noise produced by the planes, when they land and break the sound barrier will increase. Plane damages and air crashes will constitute a potential threat for the local citizens. On the Island of Okinawa (Japan), some schools have been forced to introduce special drills for children in case of a plane crash. Between 1972 and 1985 in the US air force quarters in Kadena (Japan) there were 120 air crashes of F15 planes. In 1998, an American piloting an EA-6B Prowler plane cut through the suspension cable of a gondola cableway in an Italian ski resort, thus causing the fall of the cabin which was full of passengers;
- Contrary to what is claimed by the Polish Government, local citizens would not rip profits from the American military quarters. The quarters provide but a few temporary jobs (cleaning or cooking) and its presence, as well as development of the airport will not be profitable for the local citizens, but for American corporations. In most countries, the US quarters



are co-financed or financed from the national budget of the country in which they are stationed. In Germany, the whole logistic infrastructure for the supervision and service of the American military forces: military transport, communication, radiolocation service, and even the air defence forces,



is financed from the German budget;

- The infrastructure surrounding the quarters (roads to the quarters, water supply service and others), as well as the ecological costs of the maintenance of a quarter, is imposed on the local community (e.g. water filters) and they are paid for with the money raised from our taxes. Contamination of ground water and soil caused by the Soviet military quarters has not been removed until today;

- From 1972, when the American military quarter was created on the Island of Okinawa, until 1998, 4905 crimes have been recorded, including 11 sex crimes and 11 murders committed by the US soldiers and members of the civil service. In 1995, three soldiers from the quarter raped a twelve-year-old girl, in 2003 - a fourteen-year-old girl was raped... these were not exceptional cases;

- The latest concept of the US defence strategy assumes that tactical nuclear weapon is used, even in a small local conflict. It is very likely that together with the quarters such weapon will become present on the territory of Poland;

- Polish legislation creates the possibility that, on the basis of bilateral agreements, representatives of foreign military forces can be judged by courts other than Polish, even for the gravest crimes. The US will not allow that their citizens, especially soldiers, come under the jurisdiction other than the American one. (That is why they do not recognise the International Court of Justice in the Hague). Sentences are often inadequate to the gravity of the crime. Captain R. Ashby, who piloted the plane which brought down the cabin of the cableway in Italy, thus causing the death of 20 people, was judged in the USA. Despite heavy accusations against him, Ashby was sentenced for only 6 months of arrest and the time he spent there counted as a part of his punishment. The Polish daily newspaper "Rzeczpospolita" reported: 'After the jury of 8 judges gave their verdict, Captain Ashby, who was likely to serve a 200-year imprisonment, left the court as a free man. (...) As a rule, the American military courts acquit officers, accused of manslaughter of civilians.' (May 3rd

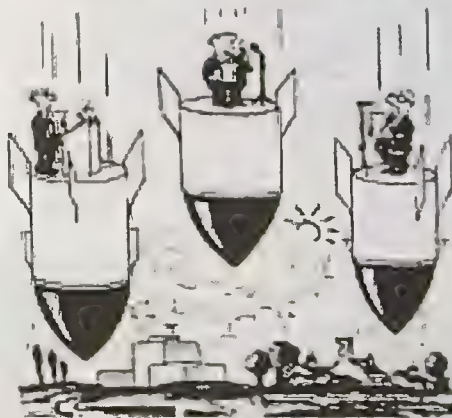
1999);

- The Prime Minister of Poland, Leszek Miller, said that "Poland is ready to host American military quarters, shall such a request be made". He did it with no previous consultations with the public. According to the creator of GROM [task force]:

The Americans have already decided that they would create their military outposts in Poland";

- Supporting the idea of the American military quarters being created in Poland, the Polish authorities violate international agreements. According to the binding Convention concerning the Reduction to Conventional Weapons (CFE), signed by Poland, there is no legal possibility of foreign military forces to be stationed on the territory of Poland. Experts unanimously agree that if any American military quarters are created on the territory of Poland, this will result in the creation of Russian military forces just beyond our east boundary: in Belorussia and probably in Ukraine. Eventually, this will mean straining relations with our neighbour countries and an increase of tension in this region;

- In the Polish national budget, there is not enough money for the National Healthcare, for the unemployed or money for local railway transport. Nevertheless, it is planned that that



expenses on armament, military interventions (Iraq), military quarters and the like, are to consume billions of Zlotys! In most of the cases, such expenses are required for the American equipment and the adjustment of the Polish military forces to NATO standards. The investments which have been promised to Poland by the USA (the so-called "offset"), have proved to be sham, as it has many times been reported by the press. It is evident that the expenses of political decisions made, without any consultations with the public, by the political elites in power, will be put on the Polish tax-payers or, perhaps, even on the successive generations;

- The Government of the USA does not reveal any details concerning the removal of their quarters to Poland, because this issue was considered by Washington to be too 'sensitive'. As a result of social protests in the Western countries, the burden of storage, or even of the production of dangerous weapons (e.g. containing reduced uranium or tactical nuclear weapon) will be placed on the Mid-Eastern Europe and Asia. The possibility of unconstrained conducting of training and trials with the use of dangerous weapons shrinks. The poorly - Poland - creates such a possibility;

- The Czech Republic did not agree on the presence of American military forces on its territory.

"The government is merely a body chosen by the nation in order to implement their will. Before, however, the nation manages to use it for their purposes, this body yields to abuse and depravation"

Henry David Thoreau

Words of the American philosopher perfectly illustrate the present situation in our country. The government is busy creating successive scandals, and its members have long ago forgot that they were to implement the will of the citizens.

Regardless of our evaluation of the Polish soldiers' participation in the war and occupation of Iraq, this important decision was not preceded by a public debate. Considering that, the first unofficial news about the likelihood of an American military quarter being build in our country, should cause our unrest. Is the decision concerning the American military quarters going to be made again without the earlier consultations with the public?

The communist regime controlled by Moscow used to act in exactly the same way - they also ignored the voice of the people.

The above-mentioned information concerning the public, ecological or economic costs, should illustrate the gravity of the whole situation. It must be born in mind that these are not the political figures from Warsaw to live in the vicinity of the planned American military quarter, consequently it is not their vote that should be deciding. We must not leave this issue for future consideration and protest only after the quarter will have already been built.

We must claim our basic right to be informed. We must not allow of the decisions concerning this issue to be made without our knowledge.

If we give up the protest, this will mean our passive consent. Let's not forget our rights and let's demand of the authorities to respect them!

Fragments of An Appeal for Support of the Campaign Against the US Military Base in Poland

(...) Our movement is opposed to presence of the American base in Poland. Taking into consideration the military significance of the issue, it seems quite possible that the biggest part of negotiations will be kept in secret and any influence on the decision will be difficult. The Polish government announced prior "public consultation". We believe that the best way to stop that project is to mobilize the local community in Kshesin. Although the official negotiations has just started, pro-government media have already described benefits for Poland if the base is set up. Prime Minister Leszek Miller said in an interview that "Poland is ready to allow US bases on its territory if such a request was made". In order to stop that ridiculous idea and make our voice noticeable and louder than government's propaganda we need strong counter-arguments. We have decided to focus on economical, ecological, social and safety arguments against the base:

economical reasons- one of the most important for the local community. The government will for sure propagandize the issue of profits for the area around the base. New workplaces (civilians servicing the base), orders for Polish companies that will build and modernize the base, food orders etc. are said to appear. That might be true, although we have heard that reality looks slightly different (for example in Germany)- the civil staff is reduced, the Americans prefer to employ US companies, the local community become dependent what makes all subsequent Americans savings extremely damaging for local people. We need any reliable information, if possible supported by examples from countries where American bases have been already set up.

ecological reasons- we are looking for any examples of adverse impacts of present bases on the environment,



what include every day base's work and planes' take-offs as

well. Especially that the base in Kshesin will be close to the National Park.

social reasons- concerning relationship between US soldiers' and the local community. For example, status of soldiers who commit a crime, attempt to hide it etc. All accidents connected with base's working, for instance famous case of shooting the cable railway in Italy (we have only incomplete information about it).

question of safety- the government's propaganda will try to prove that the level of safety in Poland will increase when the base is open. In our opinion, the presence of American army can only jeopardize the safety of our land. Concerning the US forces' criminal activity around the world, US units are particularly susceptible to attacks and may become target for not only extremist group. It means that the local community might become an accidental victim of such attacks. We need every information about attacks on American units besides areas of war.

First and foremost, political reasons are the most important for us, but we need to support them with all reasonable information concerning present American bases around the world. It will make our message more clear and effective. We ask for every info about subjects above, and all helpful matters that were not mention here. Even the most seemingly insignificant news can be extremely useful. Given that all action has international meaning we also are looking for all notes and even short descriptions of previous worldwide campaigns against the American bases. We need information about their effects and successes in particular.

If you could help, write us (the best way in English or Polish):

ruda@rozbrat.org
or P.O. Box 5, 60-966 Poznan, Poland.

Thank you for help. Please, send it to everyone who may help us.

Poznanian Anti-war Coalition

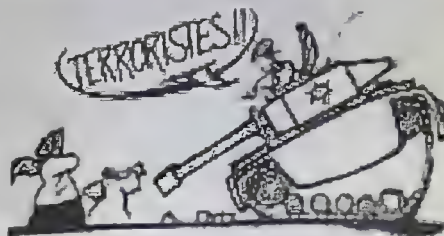
Boeing Awarded \$80 Million to Plan US Missile System in Poland and Czech Republic

The Pentagon has awarded Boeing \$80 million to begin planning and building two missile defence systems to be based in Poland and the Czech Republic, a spokesman for the US Missile Defense Agency said on Friday.

Rick Lehner said that under the contract, Boeing will deliver 10 interceptor missiles to a site in Poland and will

move a large radar system from the US Marshall Islands to the Czech Republic. A smaller, mobile radar system will also be deployed.

The project will be worth around \$3.5 billion and will come into effect once the US Congress approves a \$310 million supplementary budget request for the European missile defence programme.



This material is pretty old and actually it should be printed already in the previous issue of AbolishingBB – unfortunately it was not ready on time and afterwards we have taken a longer than expected break. However we are printing this already 4 months old report as we feel that it is very important documentation. Just check it out... ABB

"Little step forward in learning the experience of self-organizing and making links"

Report on 3rd Belarus Social Forum

Gathering Proposed and the Most Part Organized by Local Anarchists

The 3rd Belarus Social Forum took place from May 17-20 on the territory of a holiday camp near the capital of Belarus, Minsk. The event saw 150 participants from a wide range of Belarusian as well as international grassroots groups and NGO's.

Among them were representatives of the Federation of Anarchists of Belarus, Belarusian League for Sexual Equality "Lambda", Navinki Media Center, libertarian group "Autonomous Action", DIY punk-hardcore community "375crew", Amnesty International-BY, Food Not Bombs initiatives, Critical Mass movement, crypto-lesbian NGO Yana, Belarus Indymedia collective, volunteer group "Anti-psychiatry", anti-nuclear movement, Belarusian Socialist youth "Falken", Belarusian Social Movement "Razam", Volunteers Without Borders, social-democratic youth "Maladaya Hramada".

Among the internationals that attended were representatives of Front-AIDS, Socialist Movement "Vpered!", Alliance for Animals' Rights – Russia; libertarian initiatives network "Zaraz", Center of Civil Society Problems Studying, coalition "New Left" (including "Livitsa", "Basta-ua", independent trade-union "Zakhyst Pracy") – Ukraine; Caucasus Center – Armenia; Socialist Resistance, International Human Rights Bureau, Radio InKaR – Kazakhstan; Revolutionary Committees Movement – CIS; international network of social and ecological activists "EYFA"; women migrant support group "Women Without Papers" – Netherlands; Indymedia Romania, DMedia – Romania; Queerbeograd – Serbia;

Queers Without Borders (LGBT initiative for free migration) – UK; film makers from France; video news col-

2007 like, if it was successful or not, it is important to collate the facts above with afterwards subjective comments of participants of this forum, with the results of the first BSF in 2004 and, first of all, with the whole concept of social forum.

БЕЛАРУСКІ САЦЫЯЛЬНЫ ФОРУМ

lective "Karahaber" – Turkey.

The topics that were discussed in work groups ranged from: problems and perspectives of the Belarusian alterglobalist movement; the Belarusian education system, student-movement, self-governance and alternative education; Indymedia network, blogging, free and open source software; eco-activism, critical mass, and anti-nuclear movement; LGBT, Queer and women rights and empowerment; mutual aid, FNB, anti-psychiatry and migrant support work; labor exploitation and worker's self-governance; G8 in June, Germany; NoBorder Camp in August, Ukraine; ground-work for East-European Social Forum in springtime 2008 Kiev, Ukraine; development of a 'small media' network as an alternative source of information using resources like Indymedia Belarus and Navinki Media Center.

For better understanding of what was the Belarusian Social Forum-

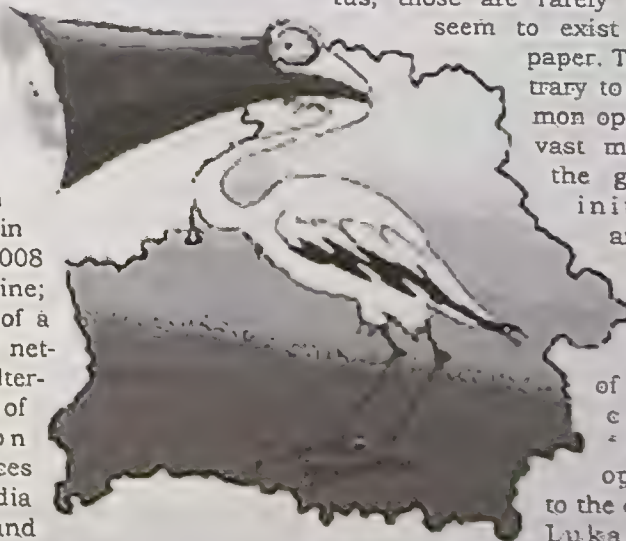
The social and libertarian movements in Belarus suffer from several serious problems such as:

1) informational isolation both outside and inside the country;
2) illegal status, thus synonymous of official ban and criminalization by the government, of most of the grassroots organizations;
3) internal disorganization and lack of experience of self-organizing of most of the groups. Many of those initiatives are more "affinity groups" of less than ten persons or kinds of chaotic activist subcultures rather than "organizations". As for specialized NGOs having officially legal status, those are rarely active or

seem to exist only on paper. Then, contrary to the common opinion, the vast majority of the grassroots initiatives and groups (anarchist or not) are not part of the so-called "united opposition" to the dictator A. Lukashenko.

Even if they

actively participate in big oppositional street demonstrations in Minsk,



leftwing and libertarian grassroots activists and groups draw little interest of opposition mainstream media on their issues and ideas.

In this situation, the original idea of the BSF, proposed by some anarchist activists in 2003, was to bring together every one or two year's as many as possible representatives of little and informal social initiatives. The aim was to become collectively visible and bring each other a mutual informational support. In line with the World Social Forum phenomena, this was done under the publicly "advertised" label of Belarusian Social Forum. The interest for anarchists was also to involve in common discussion some "specialized" organizations and initiatives who don't call themselves "anarchists" but are also critical towards both the nationalist/liberal opposition and the government. An organizing committee was created and included about 20 persons representing different groups. If most of them were overtly anarchists, there were also people linked to young social democrats, "non party" communists, trade unionists and specialized NGOs.

During about half a year before the first forum (2004) the committee regularly gathered in the office of the social democratic youth association "Maladaya Hramada" (anarchists had no place to gather). A BSF internet page was created and hosted on Navinki Media Center site. Behind technical aspects, the problems discussed by the organizing committee were:

1) How to draw public attention ("advertise" it, attract people) to the forum, to its issues and at the same time not to draw "too much" attention of the authorities before the meeting itself? We were aware that the authorities would necessary try to do everything in order that we don't find a place where to gather if they knew exactly what and where would happen. That's why it was decided that the "technical" organizing staff and the meeting place must be discreet before the meeting itself. But no media service was created (the organizing committee being too heterogeneous) which led to further problems in communication with

mainstream journalists.

2) How to protect the anonymity of individual participants? If several libertarian activists are publicly known (for instance: Navinki Media Center staff; "old generation" anarchists, one anarchist was even elected local councilor in a district of Gomel), many young activists are interested to remain personally anonymous. This problem has remained unresolved until now and seems to dissuade several people from participating (especially antifa activists).

3) How to stay open and at the same time prevent fascists or rightwing persons or groups from participating? A registration form (conceived to download on the BSF internet site, send by mail to organizers and then wait for their reply) was created in order to know who's who (however, personal data were not necessary) among new participants. The only and very explicit criterion to exclude people or groups was the Chapter of principles of the BSF. This "two steps" application was conceived for security and discretion of the place of the forum even if it seemed a bit "bureaucratic" from outside.

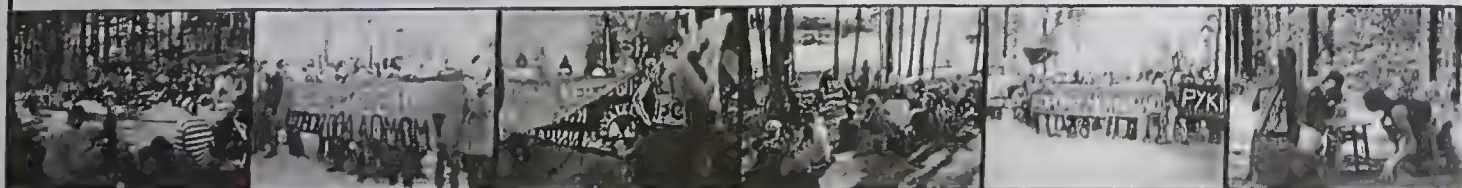
Nevertheless, about 150-200 persons took part in the event (including 120 delegates that registered officially!) – either as individuals or representatives of groups. The first BSF was considered as a success in the afterwards comments of most of the participants.

As I know, a similar schema of organizing the meeting was used in 2007 with some differences however. First, the conditions of organizing public political events in Belarus have considerably worsened in 2006-2007. Now every "non registered organization" is explicitly considered as criminal by the law in Belarus. As a result, the preparation of the BSF-2007 had to become a bit more discreet and thus unwillingly restricted the participation. But even such discretion did not preserved us from a police raid during the forum. Second, in relation with this narrowing of the public space, an underground libertarian movement in Belarus has considerably grown up numerously and diversified.

Initiated by the LINUX users group and announced during the first BSF, Belarus Indymedia resource started as well as other activist sites and blogs, thus creating quite autonomous libertarian media spaces. DIY, "Food not Bombs" and "Critical Mass" projects, "Anti-Psychiatry", Antifa, "Animal Liberation" and other libertarian and leftwing "specialized" initiatives are developing all over the country. Third, the split between anarchists and old liberal opposition (social democrats and independent trade unions included) has become even deeper since 2004.

In this context, when the BSF-2007 was initiated, people began to ask to whom would be addressed the message of this meeting. As actually there is no secure public media space any more that we can use in Belarus. This skepticism was partly justified afterwards by little interest that participants had in 2007 to send their written communications for the BSF site. And also by the fact that Belarusian opposition mainstream media did not cover the BSF-2007 at all. That's why, in opinion of many participants and observers, the Belarusian Social Forum-2007 was a failure as a collective instrument for "advertising" leftwing and libertarian social issues and alternatives in wider Belarusian society. Many participants had the impression to talk into space at the forum, so few people from "outside" would hear them.

Nevertheless, the other of the two main goals of the forum was achieved. The BSF was used by isolated local libertarian activists and groups as a unique opportunity to gather, exchange experience and discuss projects with dozens of people with similar opinions. For many participants it was a new little step forward in learning the experience of self-organizing and making links. Some country wide and international libertarian projects (see the table at the top) were born, discussed and announced during the forum. Let's hope that these new plans will be followed by new actions soon. If they are then the BSF experience will be worth continuing.



"More privatizations, more economic deregulation, more gentrification projects, increasing commodification of public goods..." to be seen in Turkey after the election in which most of society voted for stability rather than a specific party

Interview with Anarchists from Turkey

For the first time in a long time we are publishing an interview with anarchists from Turkey. We wanted to use this opportunity and at least touch in this interview as many issues as possible. Many of them need a closer look at for sure and we hope to be able to help with it in the next issues of the journal. However, this interview can already provide a better understanding of some contemporary social and political processes going on in this region as well as information on the positions of the local anarchists on them. At least the very position presented by comrades below. ABB

ABB: We will start and finish this interview with pretty general questions. The first one is connected with our publication. For over 5 years our journal has problems with establishing regular cooperation with anarchists from Turkey in terms of providing information for ABB-journal. What do you think, is it connected with the general international isolation of Turkish anarchists or rather with completely different reasons?

This is a tough question since it requires a general perspective on anarchism in Turkey. I define myself close to the organizational and theoretical principles which the authors of "the Organizational Platform of Libertarian Communists" tried to outline about 80 years ago. From this perspective I believe that "regular cooperation" requires regular organizational structures which provide a regular intervention in the social struggles and also theoretical refinement parallel to these practices. Therefore the issue of international isolation is deeply related to the structural problems of Turkish anarchism like being mainly a youth movement lacking structures to organize and to evaluate its activities and also to prevent informal authorities.

Issues like state repression are hardly a big direct problem for anarchists in Turkey. No anarchist except for the anti-militarist objectionists has ever experienced big legal problems individually or organizationally, mainly because the current anarchist

activity does not really disturb the hegemony of the ruling classes. It only affects them indirectly in the form of a general cynicism in the society.

ABB: Before we come to the situation in Turkey after the elections, could you describe the anti-election campaign run by anarchists in the time before? What sort of actions was used and what anti-

a social demand or struggle to overcome this cynicism.

As far as I know four groups made some anti-election work. "52 Percent" group in Istanbul organized a campaign around "May God Damn All of Them Party". Bursa Antiauthoritarian Initiative and Otonomizmir from Izmir made some leafleting and stickers. Anarchist Front in Istanbul made a declaration against the elections.

On the other hand Taehanka Anarchist Communist Collective from Ankara supported the independent candidates of the Kurdish movement.

ABB: Could you present what changes can be observed in Turkey directly after the change of power?

The general election of 22nd July was a determining event to change the power struggles among the ruling blocs, because it was a test of legitimacy for each of them. The obvious winner was the AKP government and the obvious loser is

election approaches/alternatives proposed to the society by anarchists in this period? Has this campaign brought any effects? What are specific aspects and difficulties of anti-election campaign within the Turkish socio-political climax?

Turkey has a quite high participation rate in elections: about 80 %. On the other hand everybody is generally cynical about the elections. People voted for stability rather than a specific party. In this context anti-election campaigns could only be meaningful, if they can relate themselves to

CHP (RPP: Republican People's Party) and the army. AKP got nearly half of all votes and participation was at about 85 %. Although especially some Islamists and liberals presented this huge increase as "a civil memorandum" to the coup threats of the army, probably it is related to the success of AKP to fill the empty space in the center right. Traditionally the right parties got about 60-70 % of the vote and the left gets the remaining.

In this election the nationalist MHP was too radical for most voters and also too similar to the elitist "left"-Kemalism of RPP. Also traditional center right parties like DYP and



ANAP got incredibly discredited. Meanwhile the so-called left (RPP and DSP bloc) was so much into nationalism that it forgot to propose any socio-economic program for the working masses. Therefore people from all classes tended to vote for stability, i.e. the AKP. The AKP vote was highest at lower classes, while it competed with MHP for the Anatolian petit and middle bourgeoisie and the youth of lower and middle classes. The RPP had got the highest vote percentages in middle and upper classes and the Alewi religious minority. The failure of the MHP was more secret since it managed to enter the parliament, but it got only 14 % compared to 18 % in 1999 elections. Since three rather than two parties managed to get more than 10 % the AKP lost seats, but the new parliament is more AKP-friendly. The RPP is almost isolated and even its ally DSP accepted the popular legitimacy of the AKP.

One other reason for the softening of anti-AKP feelings are obviously the MPs of the Kurdish party, DTP. The DTP lost many votes to the AKP. Technical reasons like the low literacy rate among the Kurds who recognized the party from its emblem, but cannot differentiate between the names of many independent candidates had an effect. But the social reasons are far more important. The DTP lacks a definite program to define and solve the Kurdish national question. It also lacks a socio-economic program to organize and to satisfy the needs of Kurdish masses. On the other side the Kurdish territories were bases of Islamism in the early 80s and therefore the success of the AKP has deep roots in the Kurdish society. An Islamist commentator noted that the

biggest Islamic sect in Turkey (Gülen sect) made a very strong campaign for the AKP. Now every social and political group spends its time to boil over or to preach to the DTP.

The second man of the AKP, Abdullah Gül, became new Turkish president quite peacefully. The next fights among the ruling blocs will be



around the new constitution. AKP will renew the constitution and proposes to delete the references to Kemalism and Atatürkism. The EU also advises to cancel the 301st article which protects "Turkishness". But all of these debates should be seen as inter-elite conflicts which do not have anything to give to the working class and working class activists. Even if these liberal changes are made we will still have the harsh anti-terror and police laws created by the previous AKP government. Also the 302nd article was used recently as a substitute for 301st article.

Two comrades wrote a detailed analysis of the social and political situation in Turkey before the elections: "Turkey: Modernization, Authoritarianism and Political Islam" (to find on www.anarkismo.net/newswire.php?story_id=5864)

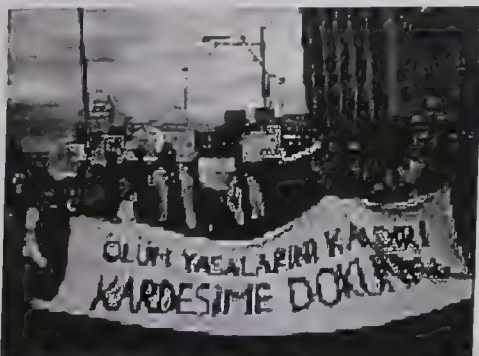
ABB: ... and what is to be expected from the new political elite in the long term perspective? What influence can it have on the near future strategies of the local anarchist movement?

The AKP will continue the neoliberal offensive. That means more privatizations, more economic deregulation, more gentrification projects, increasing commodification of public goods

etc. This is a major issue, but the radical left in general and particularly anarchists were not able to intervene in the current struggles against neoliberalization or to become initiators of them. This is an important issue, because it affects large sectors of working masses. Before the elections negotiations between the state and public employees and after the elections group negotiations in a number of economic sectors like textiles, airlines, communication, defense came to naught. Even for the most corrupt union bureaucrats the impositions of the ruling classes were too harsh and fast.

The AKP presents itself as a liberal alternative to the hegemony of the army, but this is only an illusion. It was the previous AKP government that created the 301st article, the new Anti-Terror and Police Laws. The failure of all legal trials against the gangs of the "deep state" is another example which shows that the AKP wants to negotiate with the Kemalist elite rather than abolishing its institutional bases and building a modern bourgeois democracy (A lot of people on the left actually voted for the AKP and some "leftwing" theorists even argued that the elections represented a bourgeois democratic revolution. The high pro-AKP voting percentages in the Kurdish regions are also partially caused by this illusion). The AKP probably wants to infiltrate and conquer the deep state rather than annihilating it. State oppression will be a major issue in the near future and we should have no illusions about the source of it.

The AKP's political use of Islam aids a strategy to integrate the Kurds without any cultural rights. This Islamism also harms religious minorities like the Alewi Moslems and women. But



any struggle should keep in its mind that the AKP did not gain a decisive victory over the military and civil Kemalist elites. Therefore any struggle in the future should be based on an analysis of the balances of power between the ruling blocs.

ABB: *In the recent weeks various Turkish anarchist groups were very busy with the case of the murder of Festus Okey. We are describing this case in a separate text in our journal so we would like to ask you about two specific aspects. The first one is a description of the work the anarchist groups have done around this issue.*

Directly after the murder one Leninist group managed to make a protest with black immigrants. Some of these immigrants said that they faced treats from the police and therefore they were not eager to participate in the later protests and discussion meetings. This obviously destroyed even the little chances to make a permanent campaign about the issue, because it will be mere substitutionism. According to our recent experience in the campaign after the Shemdinli* bombings isolated actions of about a hundred people in the city centers have little effect on the events especially due to the lack of sustained relationships among the working masses living in the suburbs. We have organized a march and will probably make new ones parallel to the developments in the investigation. We continue to discuss other proposals.

ABB: *The second aspect deals with the fact of direct cooperation of anarchist groups with various left-wing political parties during this campaign, going as far as giving out common statements... You can understand, that for many anarchists, especially for those from Eastern Europe, it sounds very disgusting. Could you explain how it came to this cooperation and what are the further plans on this terrain?*

I have earlier experiences of working with Leninists, but this was probably the first one with so many anarchist organizations. Since I was born in an Eastern European country before the collapse of the USSR I can understand the necessity to draw a thick line between statist and libertarian left in front of the public. But in Turkey a joint campaign is not more illegitimate than a solely anarchist campaign. I believe that we need a culture of cooperation among the left

groups based on freedom of propaganda to avoid mixing the flags. The amount of cooperation should also depend on circumstances, issues and commonality of principles. Leninists have always been bad and brutal examples of revolutionaries, but in the direst circumstances (like the Spanish Revolution) we can find some Leninists (like POUM) at our side while some libertarians (like the CNT ministers and the majority of the CNT members who voted for the participation in the Popular Front government) are confused or even willing to side with the counterrevolution (like the Spanish CP).

ABB: *Turkish government had just started another offensive against the Kurdish rebels, which is just the new capital of the old and brutal history of oppression, nationalism and militarism. Are anarchists in Turkey able to deal at all with such massive political issue right now?*

Basically no. One reason is the size and geographic location of anarchism:



YER: BARIS MANÇO KÜLTÜR MERKEZİ
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I do not know any group or even individual living in the Kurdish provinces. The second issue is about strategies and tactics: A realistic anarchist response to the Kurdish question is still not present. It is one of the many issues where anarchists do nothing else than chanting slogans (In my opinion the statement on the murder of Festus Okey represents a positive development since it tries to list some major issues and demands rather than praising social revolution and damning the state in abstract terms). Lastly, anarchists lack organizations to fight back the state repression. Except for a few groups most anarchist are interested in forming broad and loose anarchist action networks

rather than developing non-hierarchical and strong organizational structures and in these circumstances even the most positive intervention to radicalize the Kurdish masses in a libertarian way will mean a harsh repression and devastation. I prefer an anarchist movement composed of different anarchist groups with different strategies, tactics and organizational structures cooperating from time to time. In the current condition a lot of different people with or without permanent activity are gathered around theoretical and practical minimum requirements and this pulls everyone to this minimum: an abstract anti-statism which is practically just chanting slogans from protest to protest.

ABB: *And in the end another general question. How would you describe the condition of the Turkish anarchist movement of today? Are there any new tendencies, forms of actions, groups, organizations or structures?*

I generally answered the first question. The most popularized activity of anarchist has been the anti-militarist struggle. Campaigns for objectionists entered the mainstream media. In the recent years anarchist communism or platformism emerged with groups like the Tackanka group in Ankara and the Anarchist Communist Initiative in Istanbul. Their tactics are mainly based on class struggle like solidarity works in working class communities and solidarity with unionization resistances and strikes. The oldest anarchist organization, the Anarchist Youth Federation, reappeared with new names like Anti-Nuclear Front and 52 Percent. It is still isolated by other anarchist groups due to its use of violence against an anti-militarist many years ago. All other groups I mentioned in previous answers were founded in recent years.

ABB: *Thank you for this interview.*

You're welcome. I hope that this would be a positive step for farther cooperation.

* From Wikipedia: A bomb ripped Şemdinli town centre on November 1, 2005. It was officially attributed to PKK, the Kurdish guerrilla group. A second bomb went off near a bookstore on November 9. The suspects of this attack, however, were caught in the act by bystanders. They were said to be members of a gendarmerie special-operations unit. The resulting investigation developed into a major political issue in Turkey in the first half of 2006.

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All previous issues are still available directly from ABB
ISSUE #28 - March 2007: editorial/MAIN TOPIC: "Collectives - Organizing", Fascist tendencies in Slovenia, Anticapitalists in the capitol of Bulgaria, Antifa News from Russia, Czech and Poland, Actions for deserter day in Russia, The U.S. Radar base in Czech, Zero tolerance for zero Tolerance in Poland, Campaign against Sochi 2014 Olympic Games, Food Not Bombs+ AntiNATO actions in Zagreb, Fuck the trucks -Rospuda resistance, Illegal festival "Gender Paths-2", Anarchist resistance in ecological terms in Poland, Unnoticed news, Announcements, Communities in struggle and more....

ISSUE#29 - May 2007: Main topic: "Can the labour unrest of today finally be converted into the wind of social rebellion, opening the doors of solidarity and equal relations world-wide?" - anarchists towards labour struggles in Eastern Europe;

Anarcho-syndicalist and labour struggles in Czechia; Interview with an activist from Polish Union of Syndicalists; Worker's anarchism - by KRAS (Russia); Interview with a member of Workers Initiative from Poland; The struggle for free education - Serbia; Interview with workers from Greenkett factory in Poland; Precarity at work - the analysis of the problem and the strategy of the resistance; The workers movement: Reflections for anarchists; Polish and Jewish anarchists during the fascist occupation of Warsaw 1943-44; Interview with member of KRAS/Russia; Interview with ASI - Serbia; Workers of Security Services Branch want to the unions (Poland); Mayday reports from Eastern Europe; The story of a riot-causing monument in Estonia; Anarcha-feminist festival in Zagreb - Croatia; Anarchist Bookfair in Zagreb - Croatia; Latest from the anarchist scene in Estonia; Student protests in Russia; Chernobyl Protest Day in Minsk - Belarus; and much MORE!

Communities in Struggle

The Never Complete List of Anarchist Groups, Projects and Collectives from Eastern Europe

WELCOME TO EE ANARCHISM

www.alter.most.org.pl (good english)
www.abb.hardcore.lt (bad english)

ARMENIA

- * "Proryv" - anarcho-communist group from Yerevan; vaga@freenet.am
- * Armenia Indymedia - vahagn@bem.am

BELARUS

- * ABC Belarus - Belarus 230023 Grodno p.o. box 217; intolerant@autonom.zzn.com; www.anarchistblackcross.by.ru
- * AFA (Antifascist Action) - Minsk; restless81@mail.com
- * Anarchist Library - Minsk; antyfa@mail.ru
- * Anti-McDonald - <http://belmac.narod.ru>; <http://kompaktor.narod.ru>
- * Antyfa - antifascist group; antyfa@mail.ru
- * Autonomous Action
 - Minsk, belarus@avtonom.org; <http://belarus.avtonom.org/>
 - Gomel, satana@riseup.net
 - Soligorsk (Minsk region), ADSoligorsk@gmail.com
- * Belarusian Linux Community - www.linux.hitech.by
- * "Ecoresist" - anarcho-ecological group; ecoaction@tut.by
- * FAB / Federation of Belarusian Anarhist
 - Minsk; P.O.Box 33, 220134;
 - Novopoloc; nuts-1@rambler.ru
- * Food Not Bombs - Minsk - FNBminsk@yandex.ru
- * "Free Theatre" - anarchist theatre from city of Brest; ksenia_jzberg@mail.ru
- * KDS "Razam" / Condefederation of Active Initiatives "Together" - 230005 Belarus; Grodno P.O.Box 237; kds-razam@tut.by; www.razam.by.ru
- * "Navinki" - satirical anarchist quarterly newspaper; Minsk; pauluk@tut.by; www.navinki.net
- * "Rebellious girls" - anti-sexist initiative in Minsk; rebelgirls@mail.ru
- * www.anarchistory.boom.ru - history of anarchy in Belarus
- * www.375crew.org - d.i.y. political punk/hardcore culture of Belarus

BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA

- * Anarchist Collective "Slobodna Krajina" - Banjaluka; ab_useyu@yahoo.co.uk
- * www.osvajanje.slobode.bravehost.com - anarchist info from BiH

BULGARIA

- * Anarchist Portal <http://a-bg.net>
- * Anarchist writings <http://savanne.ch/svoboda>
- * Anarcho-sprotiva autonomous group aresistance@riseup.net
- * Anarchy in BG <http://change.to/anarchy>
- * Animal rights, anarcho-primitivism, feminism <http://anarchyfuture.a-bg.net/>
- * Independent media center <http://bulgaria.indymedia.org/>
- * "Katarzis" - DIY zine, katarzis@riseup.net sfti.diy@gmail.com
- * Subcultures, crust, punk, hardcore <http://music.a-bg.net/>
- * "Svobodna Misl" - Bulgarian anarchist newsletter, <http://sm.a-bg.net/>
- * "Vasil Ikonov" - anarchist group, ikonov.a-bg.net; vasilikonov@yahoo.com

CROATIA

- * AnFemA (Anarcho-Feminist-Action) - anfema.action@gmail.com; www.anfema.tk
- * "Monte Paradiso" - squat/social centre in Pula; URK Monteparadiso ex Vojarna K.Rojc; Gajeva 5; 52100 Pula; <http://squat.net/monteparadiso>; info@monteparadiso.hr
- * Rijeka anarchist initiative - www.raianarhija.org; rai2002@net.hr
- * "Skatula" - infoshop, I.Zajca 20/2, Rijeka, www.raianarhija.org, infoshopkatula@net.hr, every day 17-20h - weekend closed
- * "Tabula Rasa" - anarchist/libertarian infoshop in Cakovec; address: Josipa Kozarca BB; post: Infoshop Tabula rasa, p.p. 18, 40315 M. Sredisce, Croatia
- * Z.A.F. / Zadar Anarchist Front - local anarchist group in the city of Zadar; zadarskianarchisti@yahoo.com; www.solidarnost.mahost.org
- * www.stocitas.org - Antiauthoritarian publisher
- * "sto citas?" b.shop Zagreb Preradoviceva 34

CZECHIA

- * Antifascist Action (AFA) - afa-praha@anarchismus.org, www.antifa.cz
- * Anarcho-feminist group - anarchofeminismus@centrum.cz, anarchofeminismus.cen.cz
- * -1155; KPK Praha (ex-Solidarita) - praha@solidarita.org, www.solidarita.org, tel: +420 604 247 218
 - regional group of Brno, brno@solidarita.org, tel: +420 732 616 695
- * Anarchistické sdružení Uherské Hradiště - Anarchist group of Uherské Hradiště, uhas@email.cz
- * "A-kontra" - anarchist magazine, c/o CAS, PO Box 223, Praha 1, 111 21, tel. +420 605 903 098, e-mail: a-kontra@csaf.cz, www.a-kontra.net
- * "Bloody Mary" - riot-grrl/anarchist zine, bloodymary@bust.com, c/o CAS, p.o. box 223, 111 21 Praha 1
- * CSAF - Czechoslovak Anarchist Federation - P.O.Box 223, 111 21 Praha 1, praha@csaf.cz, www.csaf.cz
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 - Jihlava, csaf.jihlava@email.cz, tel: +420 721 732 844
 - Eastern Czechia, undertakerdis@seznam.cz
- * FSA-MAP - Federation of anarchist groups, info@anarchismus.org, www.anarchismus.org, international secretary: fsa-intersec@anarchismus.org
 - Northern Czechia, fas-sever@anarchismus.org
 - Zlinsko, fas-zlinsko@anarchismus.org
 - Prague, fas-praha@anarchismus.org
 - Brno, fas-brno@anarchismus.org
 - Jihlava, fas-jihlava@anarchismus.org
 - Pardubice, fas-pardubicko@anarchismus.org
- * Info Café "Krtkova kolona" - (anarchist info-café), Socharská 6, 170 00, Praha 7 - Bubenec, kk@czechcore.cz, kk.czechcore.cz, Tel: 605 983 191
- * Hudebni klub "Za vraty" - alternative non-profit club with anarchist activities, tea room, Vtelno 32, 434 01 Most 1, international@zavraty.com, www.zavraty.com, tel. +420 723 555 287

www.zavraty.com, tel. +420 723 555 287

- * Squat "Milada" - Prague only squat, Na kindlovce (small house next to the student residential halls), Praha, squat_milada@centrum.cz

ESTONIA

- * Food Not Bombs - Tallinn - videomees@hotmail.ee
- * www.punamust.org/ - anarchist web-site
- * www.hot.ee/anarhism - Future Anarchist Party of Estonia

HUNGARY

- * AFK - autonomous youth collective / social disease collective (anarchist hc-punks); www.socialdisease.tk
- * Barricade Collective - anarchist group; www.anarkom.lapja.hu
- * "Gondolkodo Antikvarium" - anarchist bookshop; www.ainfok.ini.hu; gondolkodo@citromail.hu Logodi utca 51; 1012 Budapest (it is near Metro station "Moszkva ter"); open Monday-Friday 12-18
- * Ruganegra - (street folklore staff); www.ruganegra.tk
- * Social Disease Kollektiva (anarchopunk collective) - <http://socialdisease.tk>
- * www.geocities.com/anarchoinfo - anarchist web-site

KAZAKHSTAN

- * www.almaty-liberta.boom.ru - Libertarian communists in Kazakhstan

LATVIA

- * Pretspars Collective - zinc, distro, web, actions - <http://pretspars.hardcore.lt>; pretspars@riseup.net
- * "Zabadaaks" - DIY culture house, zabba@inbox.lv, www.nekac.lv, tel. +371 3320666, DIY political/cultural project, infoshop etc.; Vijaļiņu 24; Kuldīga; LV-3300Latvia; www.nekac.lv, maris.steinbergs@kuldiga.lv

LITHUANIA

- * active@hardcore.lt - LT activists network
- * "Elnias" - space for various DIY activities; Vilnius str. 72 (in the yard), Siauliai, gabrielei@takas.lt
- * "Gyvas" - space for various DIY activities, Kauno str. 1a (in the yard), Vilnius, xdirtx@hardcore.lt
- * "Pavasaris Infoshop" - Mindaugo str. 20-12, Vilnius, xdirtx@hardcore.lt
- * "Posedziu Sale" - DIY culture centre; Savanoriu str. 204 (4th floor), city of Kaunas; sgausiperemala@yahoo.com, fiorfraga@gmail.com, tel +37067809606 <http://posedis.mums.lt>
- * booking@hardcore.lt - booking in Lithuania
- * www.hardcore.lt - Lithuanian diy scene info resource on the net

MACEDONIA

- * direct action - anarchist collective directa@freemail.com.mk
- * fuck yoga - a distro and label neveranswerthephone@yahoo.com
- * kaka - a distro and label surovo@yahoo.com
- * napravi sam - a collective radexx2000@yahoo.com
- * teror 13 - a infoshop info@teror13.tk www.teror13.anarhija.org

POLAND

- * ABC/ACK - www.ack.most.org.pl
- Warszawa - po box 30; 02-741

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www.emilka-bzzz.net/porady/porady.html
- **Poznan** - po box 5, 60-966 Poznan 31,
ack@rozbrat.org, tel. 0618484672 (tue 19-
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- **Bialystok** - po box 43; 15-662 Bialystok
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- **Pzasanysz** - fnb-przasnysz@o2.pl
- **Wroclaw** - tomasso@riseup.net
* **Anarchist Library** - ul. Pulaskiego 21a;
Poznan.
* **Anarchist Library** - ul. Jagielonczyka
10D; Wroclaw.
* **"A-TAK"** - anarchist magazine from
Krakow; atak@poprostu(contact);
atak.dystybuja@wp.pl (distro); www.red-
rat.w.interia.pl/atak.html
* **"A-zine"** - an anarchist publication in
english contains articles of polish anarchist
groups. L.Akai, po box 227; 00-987
Warszawa 4. cube@zigzag.pl
* **"Bractwo Trojka"** - anarchist publishing
house from Poznan; bractwo_trojka@wp.pl,
www.bractwotrojka.prv.pl,
* **"Bunkier"** ("B 48") - underground
concert/party space; ul. Wschodnia 35;
Torun; stagnation@wp.pl
* **Chaos Grrrl** - anarchist-feminist zine
from Warsaw; chaosgrrl@o2.pl
* **"Czarna Emilka"** (Black Emily) - local of
GWA (Group of Warsaw Anarchists) in the
very centre of the city
* **"Czarny Pajak"** ("Black Spider") -
anarchist space with discussion club,
movie-projections, anarchist-library, etc. in
the city of Lodz; www.ezsz.prv.pl;
maciek@riseup.net
* **Dziewczynny w Akcji** (Girls in Action) -
anarchist feminist group in Bialystok;
www.dziewczynnywakcji.prv.pl/;
dziewczynnywakcji@wp.pl
* **"Elblaska"** - squat in Warsaw
* **Emancypunx** - anarcho-feminist group;
po box 145; 02-792 Warszawa 78;
www.emancypunx.com; emancypunx@o2.pl
* **FA (Anarchist Federation)** - federation of
polish anarchists consisting of many local
groups.
- **FA-virtual collective secretary** -
biurofa@go2.pl
- **FA-Bialystok** - fa.bialystok@op.pl
- **FA-Czestochowa** - akielasiak@wp.pl
- **FA/RSA Gdansk** - jwa@pg.gda.pl
- **FA-Krakow** - lukasdab@poczta.onet.pl
- **FA-Lublin** - falublin@poczta.onet.pl
- **FA-Lodz** - falodz@riseup.net
- **FA-Opole** - sobol13@o2.pl
- **FA-Poznan** - fa-poznan@rozbrat.org
- **FA-Rzeszow** - xjedrusx@o2.pl
- **FA-Slupsk** - onetbifaid@poczta.onet.pl
- **FA/RSA Sochaczew**
antinazi@friko6.onet.pl
- **FA-Szczecin** - fa_szn@interia.pl;
winanar@wp.pl
- **FA-Warszawa** - natak@poczta.onet.pl
- **FA-Warszawa/Praga** - fapraga@o2.pl &
fapraga@gmail.com
* **Food Not Bombs**
- **Gdansk** - po box 118; 80-470 Gdansk 45
- **Lodz** - falodz@riseup.net
- **Olsztyn** - edelweiss@o2.pl
- **Poznan** - fnb@rozbrat.org
- **Warsaw** - fnb@op.pl; www.fnb.w.pl
www.rozbrat.org/fnb.htm, we serve food
every Sunday at west train station in
Poznan
- **Rzeszow** - ul. Kustronia 6/48; 35-303
Rzeszow; tel. 602769138.

- **Gliwice** - "S.E.K.W. Krzyk"; po box 2;
44-101 Gliwice. www.food.gliwice.com
www.foodnotbombs.prv.pl
* **Feminist & Anarchist Feminist
Calendar** - feminikalendarz06@interia.pl
* **"Freedom"** - Centre of Animation and
Alternative Culture / Anarchist Centre &
Collective; ul. Jagielonczyka 10D; Wroclaw.
freedom69@go2.pl
* **Grupa Anarchistyczna "Solidarnosc"**
(Anarchist Group "Solidarity") po box 12;
60-975 Poznan 61.
* **Infoshop "Grapes of Wrath"**
Targowa St. 22; Warsaw (300 meters from the
Eastern Railway Station on Kijowska St.)
Open: Mon.-Fri. 18⁰⁰-20⁰⁰ or longer, Sun.
14⁰⁰-17⁰⁰ plus by appointment and during
events (summer 2005 closed Aug. 15-31);
fapraga@gmail.com;
www.alter.most.org.pl/infoszop,
* **Inicjatywa Pracownicza FA / IP-FA**
(Workers Initiative of FA) - federation of
groups linked to FA focusing on support for
workers;
* **IP-FA / Szczecin** - Dominik Sawicki, po
box 53; 70-474 Szczecin 34.
* **IP-FA / Silesia** - po box 2; 44-100
Gliwice; inicjatywa.silesia@hoga.pl
* **Inicjatywa Pracownicza (Workers
Initiative)** - anarcho-syndicalist trade
union, Poznan; www.workers-
initiative.poland.prv.pl
* **Kolektyw Autonomistów (Collective of
Autonomists)** - group of activist po box 13;
87-116 Torun 17; michoo77@poczta.onet.pl
* **"Kromera"** - squat/culture centre;
ul. Kromera 6a; Wroclaw.
* **LadyFest** - there are few Lady-fests in
Poland (in Lodz, Wroclaw and Warsaw);
www.ladyfest.webpark.pl;
ladyfestwawa@o2.pl
* **"Lesbians, Gays and Their Friends"** -
festival in Wroclaw with conference,
workshops, films, street actions
www.nts.uni.wroc.pl/festiwal/ (co-organized
by the anarcho-feminist groups)
* **LETS - Local Economy Trade System**
- **Krakow** - testcyf@kr.edu.pl
- **Poznan** - lets@poland.com
* **Liberta** - anarchist-feminist group in
Wroclaw; libertagrrl@o2.pl
* **"Little Mary"** - anarchist squat in
Czestochowa; ul. Warszawska 249/25;
* **"Mac Parladka"** - anarchist magazine in
polish; parladka@polbox.com
* **"Marcowanie"** - anarchist-feminist
mailing list, bulletin and regular women
camp
* **Obin (Warsaw)** - radical street-art
collective organising workshops, internet
and silkscreen for free; www.obin.org
* **"Pilon"** - underground bar/cafe open
Mo, Th, Fr and Sa from 7pm; adress: ulica
Bulwar Filadelfijski - Torun (under the only
one car bridge in the city).
pilon@poczta.onet.pl; www.pilon.za.pl
* **RAAF (Radical Anti-Fascist Action)** -
www.antifa-wildeast.prv.pl; po box 43; 15-
662 Bialystok 26. wildeast@poczta.onet.pl
* **"Radical Cheer Leaders"** - anarchist
female cheer leader team based in
Warszawa; rchpl@o2.pl
* **Refuse** - underground label & mailorder
(books, zines, music);
www.refuserecords.prv.pl
* **Revenge of The Nerds (Warsaw)** -
anarchist-feminist zine distribution/editors;
www.revengeofthenerds.bzzz.net
* **Revolution Diva** - anarchist-feminist
zine (Poznan)
* **"Rozbrat"** - squat/collective/anarchist
center/ anarchist library - ul. Pulaskiego,
21a, Poznan; P.O.Box 5, 60-966 Poznan

31, fa-poznan@rozbrat.org,
www.rozbrat.org, www.foto.rozbrat.org
* **S.E.K.W. "Krzyk"** - squat / anarchist
centre, po box 2; 44-101 Gliwice
(ul. Sienkiewicza 25; tel. +48 504878370).
* **Sister to Sister** - anarchist feminist
group/network around Poland, mail-order
and anarchist dyke zine "Lechtaczka";
sisterstosister@o2.pl
* **"streFA"** - infoshop in Szczecin;
ul. Domanskiego 1c, tel. 504935357.
* **"Szejnk"** - anti-military service and
Poznanian Anti-war Coalition; ul. Pulaskiego
21a; po box 5; 60-966 Poznan 31,
www.antywojenna.prv.pl,
antywojenna@rozbrat.org
* **"Tekno Collective"** - underground techno
crew from Torun; sadi@poczta.onet.pl
* **Ugrupowanie Feministyczne
Anarchistyczne (UFA)** - anarcho-feminist
group in Poznan; ufa@rozbrat.org
* **Valpurgi Night** - regular festival against
homophobia and sexism in Warsaw, with
workshops, conference, spoken word,
concerts, films...
www.myspace.com/nocwalpurgii;
* **Wiedźma (The Witch)** - anarcho-feminist
group; Po Box 3321-500 Biala Podlaska;
Poland; witchgrrl@poczta.onet.pl;
www.wiedza.most.org.pl
* **"Ya Banda"** - anarchist samba band
Milanówek/Warszawa. olga23@go2.pl

ROMANIA

* **Aactiv-ist Collective Timisoara, Antifa
autonome** - anarchist punk group
aactivistcollective@yahoo.com;
pinkpanthers@k.ro; aac@bumerang.ro
* **A Nera** - ecological, social and (counter)
cultural center; in the mountains Cheile
Nerei; aactivistcollective@yahoo.com
* **Actiunea Anarhista (Anarchist Action)** -
spleenpaty@yahoo.com
* **C.A.F. (Craiova Anarho Front)** -
anarchist collective from city of Craiova;
libertatero@yahoo.com
* **Fight Back** - anarchist collective
Bucharest, www.fight-back.tk
* **Gluga Neagra / Black Hood** -
distribution & bookings for diy concerts
tours; g_a_rezistent@yahoo.com
* **Info-Propaganda** - anarchist leaflets
publishing from Craiova;
libertatero@yahoo.com
* **URA** - anarchopunk fanzine from Craiova;
www.antifa-antitot.blogspot.com;
libertatero@yahoo.com
* **Love Kills** - woman anarchopunk zine /
Craiova; www.lilith-lovekills.blogspot.com;
jolierouge101@yahoo.com
* **"Revolta I"** - bymonthly anarchist & diy
hc/punk newsletter / Timisoara;
aactivistcollective@yahoo.com
* **Subteran Collectiv** - anarchist-activists
collective in the city of Iasi;
subteran_iasi@yahoo.com
* **www.proiectns.org** - grassroots activist site

RUSSIA

* **ABC-Moscow** - spt2003@email.com; P.O.
Box 13 109028 Moscow (no name on
envelope III)
* **Alliance of Kazan Anarchists** -
antimil@narod.ru; http://antimil.narod.ru
* **Anarchist League of Kamchatka** -
4tankista@mail.ru
* **Animal and Earth Liberation in Russia** -
PO Box, 135, Sochi, Russia, 354065.
anliberation@rambler.ru
* **Anti-Fa Samara** - anti_fa@mail.ru
* **Association of Anarchist Movements
(ADA)** - see "Noviy Svet" newspaper contact
address
* **"Epicenter Infoshop"** - Evgeni Fayzullin,

PO Box 103, St. Petersburg, 190013;
epicenter-infoshop@nm.ru;
www.infoshop.spb.ru

* Food Not Bombs

- Main Website:
http://foodnotbombs.net.ru
- Volzhskiy - fnbvz@mail.ru
- Voronezh - fnb-vrn@yandex.ru
- Irkutsk - fnb-irk@yandex.ru
- Kirov - punkauskirov@mail.ru
- Krasnodar - fnb_krsndr@mail.ru
- Moscow - fnb-russia@yandex.ru
- Nizhni Novgorod - fnbnnov@rambler.ru
- Novosibirsk - x316x@mail.ru
- Perm - fnbperm@mail.ru
- Rostov-na-Donu - subbacultcha@mail.ru
- St. Petersburg - epicenter-infoshop@nm.ru
- Tolyatti - fnbtt@mail.ru

* Free Trade Unions Confederation -

Tomsk; http://kulac.narod.ru

* Indymedia Russia - (in Russian language) http://russia.indymedia.org; indyru@anadir.org;

* indymoskwa@pochtamt.ru (Moscow);

* indymedia_piter@pochtamt.ru

(Petersburg);

* riseup@riseup.net (Kiev, Ukraine)

* IOKAS / Irkutsk Organization Of

Anarcho-Syndicalist Federation -

www.angelfire.com/ia/IOKAS;

idorovan@mail.ru

* Jerry Rubin Club - Moscow punk club, cooperating with anarchists and environmentalists; jrc@nm.ru; http://jerryclub.narod.ru

* KRAS - IWA (Confederation of Revolutionary Anarchosyndicalists) -

Moscow: c/o Vadim Damier; -Pereulok Alynova 13 Kv 24; 107258 Moscow; comanar@mail.ru; http://airus.narod.ru

* "Megaphon" - magazine of anarchist, anticapitalist, antiwar, labour, environmental and other kinds of activism; megaphon@mail333.com

* Network of Working-place Resistance - cockney@rambler.ru, http://antijob.nm.ru

* "Noviy Svet" - anarchist newspaper; newworld@mail.admiral.ru; http://novsvet.narod.ru (all issues since 1989).

* "Nozhi i Vilki" - political punk/hardcore fanzine; zilonis@newmail.ru

* Old Skool Kids - punk/hardcore label and distro; oldschoolkids@yahoo.com; http://oskids.nm.ru

* Petersburg Antiwar Committee - see "Noviy Svet" contact address

* Petersburg League of Anarchists - see "Noviy Svet" contact address

* Punk Revival - network of politically and socially active punks from St. Petersburg www.pv.mahost.org

* Rainbow Keepers - radical environmental movement. Contact addresses:

- Nizhniy Novgorod - klem@dront.ru
- Votkinsk - votkinskrk@mail.ru
- Kasimov - rk@rk.ryazan.ru (this is also the address of Tretiy Put magazine)
- Perm - puliark@rambler.ru
- Volgograd - maasha@rambler.ru
- Ekaterinburg - vty2@mail.ru, dpn@etel.ru
- Moscow - rkrzl@seu.ru, blatoba@mail.ru
- Samara - duplo1@mail.ru, duplo@samtel.ru http://duplo.narod.ru
- Rostov - rkrostov@don.sitck.net

* S.H. Sound System - label & distro including political punk stuff; http://svinokop.narod.ru; diyhq@yahoo.com

* Siberian Confederation of Labour -

Omsk; www.skt.org.ru

* "Utopia" - anarchist magazine of revolution and counterculture Vladlen Tupikin, p.o. box 80, m-208, Moscow, 117208, Russia; utopia@mail333.com

* "Victor Serge's Library" - anarchist & communist library - City Library no.10, ulitsa Verkhnyaya Khokhlovka 39/47, metro "Marksistskaya"; Tel/fax: +7 095 278 8156; www.sergelibrary.org/

* "Volja" - anarchist newspaper (since 1989); obschtschina@pisem.net; http://volja.nm.ru

* "Zhest" - anarcho-feminist magazine; zhest@pisem.net

* www.squatting.ru - portal, dedicated to squatter movement!

* Contacts of Autonomous Action

Federal site is www.avtonom.org

* Correspondents of Autonomous Action (distributors of press of the organisation without a formal membership)

- Voronezh - dingir@mail.ru, http://anarhvrn.narod.ru/ad
- Izhevsk - projectfreedom@mail.ru; timmad@udm.ru; antiwar@udm.ru
- Yoshkar - Ola - punk@zvenigovo.ru
- Kolomna (Moscow Region, Russia) - matherfacker2017@mail.ru
- Naberezhnye Chelny (Tatarstan, Russia) - anarchists@chelny.com
- Ozersk (Chelyabinsk Region, Russia) - padlik@bk.ru
- Murmansk - P. O. Box 4614, 183050 Murmansk Russia.
- Saint Petersburg - blackguard@mail.ru
- Minsk (Belarus) - belarus@avtonom.org; www.belarus.avtonom.org
- Lida - 2 (Grodno Region, Belarus) P. O. Box 11, 231282 Lida -2, Grodno Oblast, Belarus
- Donetsk (Ukraine) - redrash@mail.ru; redskins@mail.ru
- Sumy (Ukraine) - ivangrob@mail.ru

* Websites of Groups linked to Autonomous Action:

- http://ad-direct.newmail.ru - federal site maintained from Novorossisk
- http://redskin.newmail.ru - Red and Anarchist Skinheads RASH, maintained from Novorossisk
- http://antijob.nm.ru - site against work, maintained from Moscow
- http://anti-fa.da.ru - Anti-fascist project "Black and Green resistance" from Samara
- http://potok.hotmail.ru - website against Blue Stream gas pipeline, maintained from Novorossisk
- www.ad-nn.narod.ru - Nizhni Novgorod group of anarchists
- www.poet5.narod.ru - website of anarchist culture, maintained from Nizhni Novgorod
- www.tao.ca/~dlkobraz/distro - A-distro, biggest distributor of Anarchist literature in the former Soviet Union

SERBIA

* ASI / Anarcho-Syndicalist Initiative - is@inicijativa.org (international secretary); www.inicijativa.org

* Federation of Internationalist Anarchists - federacija@ml1.net

* Subwar Collective - Belgrade; shavedwomen216@yahoo.com

* www.anarchy-serbia.tk - www.inventati.org/anarhizam or www.anarhizam.tk

* www.afanovisad.tk - Antifa Novi Sad

* www.kontra-punkt.info - anarchist information & discussion web-site

SLOVAKIA

* AFA-Bratislava (Antifasistická Akcia Bratislava) - bacity_afa@yahoo.com http://blava.antifa.net

* Alternative Magazine in slovak

language - biedaduehay@safe-mail.net

* Antifascist Action from Trnava - antifa-trnava@hushmail.com

* Cirny Kriz (CK, Black Cross) - ciernykriz@yahoo.com.

* CSAF / Slovakia (CSAF - Czech-Slovakia Anarchist Federation) - slovensko@csaf.cz

- Bratislava - bratislava@csaf.cz

- B.Bystrica - bbystrica@csaf.cz

- Trencin - trencin@csaf.cz

- Vychod - csaf_sk_vychod@yahoo.com

* FNB Trnava - jedlott@safe-mail.net

* INFO-@POLICE - anarchist Infoshop in Bratislav; info@infoapolic.sk

* Priama Akcia (Direct Action) - radical social anarchist organization / anarchist union; po box 16; 840 08 Bratislava 48; priamaakcia@yahoo.com

SLOVENIA

* A-distribution "Kontrakultura distribucija" - kultura_kontra@yahoo.com.

* Akd Izbruh Kulturni Bazen - autonomous culture centre in squated swimm-pool in Kranj; www.akd-izbruh.tk; akd_izbruh@yahoo.com

* Anarhiv Resource Center - Metelkova 6, SI - 1000 Ljubljana, tel. 00386-1-4340345, anarhiv@mail.ljudmila.org, www.ljudmila.org/anarhiv

* SAF / Social Anarchist Federation - saf.info@email.si

* Union of self-organised workers - SiSD/USW - is_usw@yahoo.com Tel.: 00386(0)31892967

UKRAINE

* Autonomous Action / Donetsk - redrash@mail.ru; redskins@mail.ru

* Infoshop - infoshop in Kiev, http://infoshop.zaraz.org;

infoshop@gmail.com

* Food Not Bombs - Kiev - die_young@riseup.net

* www.zaraz.org - Kiev's portal of libertarian initiatives. Web-site of anarchist group in Kiev. info@zaraz.org

TURKEY

* Anarsist Bakis -

http://go.to/anarsistbakis - archive of anarchist texts

* ABC / Anarchist Black Crescent - abckara@yahoo.com

* "Imlasiz" - www.imlasizdergi.cjb.net-anarchist magazine

* "Isimsiz" - anarchist counter-magazine; isimsiz_dergi@yahoo.com

* KaosGL - www.kaosgl.com - antiauthoritarian gay/lesbian group and magazine

* "Kara Kizil" - www.karakizil.tr.cc-anarchocommunist group

* http://uygarligakarsi.cjb.net - anarchoprimitivists

* http://ankarafanzin.freesevers.com - zine from Ankara

* http://veganarsl.cjb.net - anarchoprimitivist zine

* www.geocities.com/kaosyayinlari - anarchist publisher in Istanbul

* www.mecmu-a.org - magazine from Istanbul



EDUCATE - ORGANIZE - PROTEST



ANALYSE - RESIST - CREATE NEW